Chronicles

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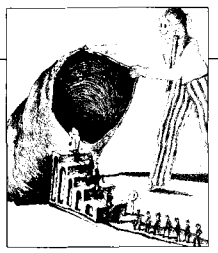

PERSPECTIVE

The Illusions of Democracy 8
by Thomas Fleming

Facts and fantasies.

VIEWS

Coleridge and the Battle of Waterloo 12
by George Watson
Critical theory among the English.

Postmodernism, Theory, and the End of the Humanities by E. Christian Kopff 16
Deconstructing deconstruction.

Whig History and Lost Causes by Jeremy Black 20
Making the past serve the present.

Thomas Szasz Against the Theorists 23
by Irving Louis Horowitz
The myth of mental illness.

OPINIONS

Glad To Be of Use by Samuel Francis 27
Michael Lind: *The Next American Nation: The New Nationalism and the Fourth American Revolution.*
Chronicling the overclass.

REVIEWS

The Letters of Ayn Rand shows what happens when theory governs life, writes **Thomas E. Woods, Jr.** ◆ **J.O. Tate** recommends *America First! Its History, Culture, and Politics* by Bill Kauffman ◆ **Philip Jenkins** sees strengths and weaknesses in *God: A Biography* by Jack Miles and *The Origin of Satan* by Elaine Pagels ◆ **Gregory McNamee** praises Graham Coster's *A Thousand Miles from Nowhere: Trucking Two Continents* ◆ 31

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter From Inner Israel: The Goyim Aren't Always Wrong 36
by Jacob Neusner

Letter From England: Multiculturalism in Metroland 37
by Derrick Turner

VITAL SIGNS

SOCIETY: Race, Aids, and Sexual Behavior 39
by J. Philippe Rushton

EDUCATION: Whatever Happened to the New Math? by Ralph A. Raimi 40

POLITICS: Merry Kwanzaa 42
by Nicholas Stix

ECONOMICS: Who Are the Taxers? 43
by Jeffrey Tucker

LAW: Recapturing the Constitution 44
by Stephen B. Presser

Our Platonic Guardians 46
by Gregory J. Sullivan

The Ultimate Tax Protest 47
by Douglass H. Bartley

LITERATURE: Kiddy Lit for the 90's 48
by Herb London

DEPARTMENTS

POLEMICS & EXCHANGES 4

CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS 4

THE HUNDREDTH MERIDIAN 49
Elk Country
by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

POETRY
Among the Home Folks 7
Kulchur 11
A Pregnant Teen 19
and
Prozac 22
by Harold McCurdy

ON THE COVER

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A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

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POLEMICS & EXCHANGES

On Scots Nationalism

Michael Hill, in "Scots Nationalism, Yesterday and Today" (November 1995), says that few men of the caliber of our forefathers are alive today and that "we lack the spirit of resistance that moved our forebears to defend their ancient liberties." If the "we" referred to consists of academics, corporate executives, and conservatives, then I heartily agree with the assessment. However, as a general, demoralizing indictment, it doesn't obtain.

Gordon Kahl battled federal marshals in the Dakotas, and Robert J. Matthews made his epic, last stand 11 years ago this December on Whidbey Island, Washington. The late Vicki Weaver is of the same mettle as the pioneer women who held the Plains Indians at bay. We do not lack for heroes. What is lacking is a willingness on the part of right-wing men of wealth and station to assist these heroes. The Weavers found a champion in attorney Gerry Spence. Due to Matthews' eccentric political affiliations, his bones have been left as carrion for tabloid caricature, though his memory is kindled by a small segment of lower-class, young white Americans.

—*Michael A. Hoffman II*
Coeur d'Alene, ID

Dr. Hill Replies:

Mr. Hoffman is correct in pointing out the sacrifices made by the likes of Vicki Weaver, Gordon Kahl, and Robert Matthews against a federal Leviathan bent upon depriving us of our liberties. He is also right when he says that, in general, "academics, corporate executives, and conservatives" lack "a willingness . . . to assist these heroes." It was not my intention to issue a "demoralizing indictment," but merely to point out that all too few Americans of every station take seriously the threats to their freedom.

I had hoped to challenge those of position and power who fancy themselves conservatives and traditionalists to call forth the courage of our Scottish ancestors in restoring the Old Republic. Undoubtedly, there are tens of thousands of hardworking, patriotic Americans who display this courage every day; however, they lack proper organization and leadership—without which they will not succeed in rolling back the power of the illicit state. To give direction to the emerging populist groundswell, it is time for men of influence to take a stand.

CULTURAL REVOLUTIONS

SIR JAMES GOLDSMITH's *The Trap* (New York, 1994) is the clearest introduction to the arguments against global free trade and its consequences for the nation. The English translation adds helpful notes and bibliography to the French original, *Le Piège* (Paris, 1993). In some places, however, rearrangement and omission change Goldsmith's message.

The last chapter of *Le Piège* ends with a ringing endorsement of economic nationalism: "Our supreme responsibility will remain that of protecting the sovereignty, identity, territory and stability of the nation. Maastricht and GATT are trying to destroy these foundations of our society. Question: Is that why you are running for the European Parliament? Answer: Yes." (He won a seat.) The English *Trap* suppresses this chapter and ends with what I call the Pocahontas chapter, a brief put-down of Christianity and praise of native folk cults and their purported vision of the goddess, Earth, translated from the penultimate chapter of the French. The last words in the English *Trap* come from a two-page letter supposedly written by Chief Seattle to President Franklin Pierce in 1854. (No one knows who wrote it, and there is no evidence that it was ever sent to Pierce.) We close the English *Trap* not with our duty to the nation, but with two pages of Transcendentalist mush, e.g., "Our dead never forget this beautiful earth, for it is

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the mother of the red man.... The earth is not the white man's brother but his enemy...." The French original gives us the gift Burns asked for, "to see ourselves as others see us." Near the beginning, Goldsmith notes that although the American Gross National Product has quadrupled in the last 50 years, "American society is in serious social crisis." In French, "*La société américaine [est] profondément malade*"; it is profoundly sick. Goldsmith notes in English that "The Founding Fathers originally conceived the United States as a true federation of free peoples." He goes on to say in the French, "The original conception was little by little suffocated [*étouffée*] by the central authority." Both versions tell us that Goldsmith heard Nobel Laureate James Buchanan say that Madison would be shocked if he were to return today. Only in the French does Goldsmith comment, "Our first task is to avoid degenerating into a centralized Leviathan" like the contemporary United States. Goldsmith is only one of many thoughtful Europeans who look forward to greater European unity, but always with the proviso, "we cannot allow what happened to the U.S. to happen to Europe."

Goldsmith's European patriotism is elided from the English *Trap*. "Europe has much to offer. Its civilization is far superior to the invading novelties emanating from North America." When united, Europe will have a greater influence on international affairs. "By that I do not mean intruding into everything the way America does. I mean influencing matters that really concern us, like international trade. America is trying to impose a globalist free market. A united Europe can and must protect itself from that." When asked what Europe can do, Goldsmith replies, "First of all, don't be impressed by American threats." Europe runs a large trade deficit with the United States. "Isn't it strange to see the seller threaten his client and even stranger to see the client take these threats seriously?" If Europe will not go along with global free trade, Mickey Kantor won't let them watch the next *Jurassic Park*.

The Trap is essential reading for all Americans. In French and English it explains why the European Union will be prosperous only if it is founded on the basis of prosperous and independent nations. The French original makes clear that a major obstacle to this goal is the interventionist and globalist United States regime, founded by President Roosevelt in 1933 and still very much in control. The Department of Labor has estimated that NAFTA has destroyed over 42,000 jobs in this country. (*New York Times*, October 9, 1995). NAFTA's passage was a bipartisan effort, led by the President and the Minority Leader (now the Speaker) of the House. To restore freedom and prosperity to the United States, we need to restore the "suffocated" original conception of "a true federation of free peoples," isolationist in foreign policy and continentalist in economic policy. The true Contract with America is the Constitution of the United States.

—*E. Christian Kopff*

THE NEW SEXUAL WORLD Order is taking shape, thanks to the Peace Corps, the United Nations, and the U.S. Congress. In late September, Dr. J. Ricker Polsdorfer, the Peace Corps' director of medical services in Africa, was fired for promoting abstinence as a method of preventing AIDS. Dr. Polsdorfer's crimes, according to the Peace Corps director in Zimbabwe, were that he "pushed this stance to the point that you promote only abstention, disapprove of the use of condoms and have openly expressed the belief that sexual relations with host country nationals should be against Peace Corps policy."

From teaching English, distributing food, and digging irrigation ditches to installing "confidence in condoms" and encouraging sexual liaisons with the overseas hosts—how the Peace Corps has changed in 35 years. When started by President Kennedy in 1961, the Peace Corps focused exclusively on fighting poverty, hunger, and illiteracy in the Third World; its volunteers waged the Cold War on the humanitarian front, battling Soviet influence in these countries with shovels, schoolbooks, and by the sweat of their brow. But with the Cold War over and Western consumerism and egalitarianism the official future of mankind, Americans can now move on from feeding the hungry to satisfying equally basic needs. The recent U.N. Convention on Women's Rights, where the sterilization of the Third World was planned as a humanitarian gesture, was a preview of coming attractions, and the condemnation last summer of Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe by the U.S. Congress showed how dissidents in the new order will be pressured to conform.

At the opening of the Zimbabwe International Book Fair in August, President Mugabe called homosexuals "perverts" who didn't deserve civil rights and then denied a gay rights group representation at the fair. In support of their president, some 500 members of Mugabe's Zanu Party celebrated in the streets of downtown Harare; even the Zimbabwe Council of Churches, comprising Lutheran, Methodist, Anglican, and Catholic leaders, supported Mugabe's actions.

Seventy outraged members of the U.S. Congress immediately sent a letter of protest to Mugabe, denouncing his "anti-homosexual campaign." Concerned for the well-being of its gay delegates, the World Council of Churches chimed in and threatened to cancel its Eighth Assembly, scheduled to meet in Harare in 1998. None of this fazed Mugabe in the least. "Let the Americans keep their sodomy, bestiality, stupid and foolish ways to themselves," he said. "Let the gays be gays in the United States and Europe, but they shall be sad people here." Homosexuality should be treated "as a criminal offense, like theft," he concluded. Since many Third World countries punish thieves by cutting off the offending member, Mugabe's analogy makes homosexuals uncomfortable.

"I have no idea what he thinks he is doing," said an unnamed American diplomat to the Deutsche Presse Agentur. That Mugabe might be governing his country the way his people want it to be governed, this was irrelevant. "Zimbabwe has very severe economic and political problems that need desperate attention," said the diplomat, so "why is he [Mugabe] going on about gays?" The more obvious question is why American leaders are "going on about gays" in an inconsequential country some 7,000 miles away.

—*Theodore Pappas*

THE CALIFORNIA Civil Rights Initiative was headed for trouble from the start. Conceived by two California professors, Glynn Custred and Tom Wood, the CCRI is a proposed amendment to the state constitution that would bar public agencies and schools from discriminating in favor of women or minorities. In other words, it would kill affir-

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mative action in California. Predictably, the CCRI and its authors have become the target of vicious attacks by blacks and liberals, in the grip of a collective hysteria not seen since the publication of *The Bell Curve*.

According to the *Contra Costa Times* on October 7, Fred Jordan, the head of the California Business Council of Organizations for Equal Opportunity, warns that the state will suffer economically if voters dare to endorse the measure. Blacks who work for big corporations, Jordan says, "might use their influence to dissuade them from coming to the Golden State" to hold conventions. The same issue reports that an activist named Arnoldo Torres is sponsoring three initiatives of his own aimed at protecting affirmative action.

As reports in the *Sacramento Bee* make clear, the California Democratic Party has been at the forefront of the attacks on professors Custred and Wood. The attacks are invariably personal. Bill Press, chairman of the state party, says that "They are tools of the Republican Party and they're probably too dumb to know they are being used." A May 17 editorial in the *Bee* blasted Bob Mulholland, an advisor to the state party, for saying "he intends to 'research' Wood and Custred . . . to determine 'if they ever paid their taxes, inappropriately touched students or [have] ever been involved in lawsuits.' . . . Mulholland says that such research is a standard part of the political process."

But the most interesting remarks come from Willie Brown, speaker emeritus of the California State Assembly. Speaking before a mob of mostly black and Latino students on the Hayward campus of Cal State University, where Professor Custred teaches, Brown urged his audience to take Custred's class. "You ought to do what you do best, to terrorize professors you don't like," he said. If the students follow his advice, Brown assured them, "I guarantee [Custred] will be a basket case by the end of the term."

Though its influence may be waning almost everywhere, the left can still muster its forces to harass, threaten, and intimidate. Unfortunately for the left, most Californians are implacably hostile to affirmative action and the ideology behind it. According to a field poll conducted in September, almost 60 percent of Golden State voters who have heard of the initiative are in favor of it. If this figure is broken down along party lines, the results are surprising: about three-fourths of Republicans support the CCRI, and no fewer than 41 percent of Democrats side with them.

The racial breakdown is interesting, too. About two-thirds of white males are behind the initiative, and it enjoys the backing of some 44 percent of Latinos. While most blacks decry the measure as racist, about one in four of them endorses it. (This isn't the first sign that the left can no longer depend on black support on any racial issue. According to the December 6, 1994, issue of the *Village Voice*, about half of California's blacks voted for Proposition 187.)

Despite the acrimony of the left-wing activists, the CCRI may yet have a fighting chance. "To our knowledge," says Custred in the August 8 *Sacramento Bee*, "no significant portion of the American electorate has yet been given a chance to vote its conscience" on affirmative action. Until now. Although Custred and Wood have managed to raise $450,000, they still need to cough up another million dollars to get their initiative on the November 1996 ballot. Those who would like to help their campaign may write to CCRI, P.O. Box 67278, Los Angeles, CA 90067.

—*Michael Washburn*

Oxford University Press, perhaps the most prestigious English-language Bible publisher (although far from the largest), brought out *The New Testament and Psalms: An Inclusive Version* on September 11. After "more than five years of steady work," the editors, according to Oxford University Press Senior Editor for Bibles Donald Kraus, sought "to expand the richness and deepen the expressiveness of a text that is already very familiar to many readers." The text is a revision, or perhaps better, a distortion, of the already politically correct *New Revised Standard Version*.

It must be rather humiliating to the editors who worked steadily for five years to have produced the same product that a college newspaper editor armed with a manual of politically correct "inclusive" language could have generated in a few weeks. The NRSV sought to make all references to human beings unisex and was even reluctant to admit that Jesus Christ was a man. Thus it edits one of the classic confessional statements of Scripture, which speaks of "One mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," to read "One mediator between God and humanity, Christ Jesus, himself human" (I Timothy 2:5). Although this is not, strictly speaking, a gross mistranslation, it does change the nuances and suggests unorthodox views: "Between God and men" reflects the familiar idea that individuals must come to God in repentance, becoming disciples and being baptized, whereas "humanity" might suggest universalism, the redemption of all humans *qua* humans. Perhaps the more dangerous error insinuated by dropping the noun "man" and substituting the generic "human" in adjective form is not a loss of the reality that Jesus was a man (male of the human species), but a loss of the fact that he was a real, historic, individual human (man), not a generic human. "Christ Jesus, himself human" instead of "the man Christ Jesus" adulterates the biblical and creedal confession that the Son (the second Person of the Godhead, according to Christian doctrine) not only "became flesh," but also was "made man," a complete human being, and as it happens, for whatever reason it may have pleased God, one of the male sex.

Nevertheless, the NRSV retained traditional language for the deity Himself and did not venture to edit the words used by Jesus in addressing God in the most familiar of all Christian prayers, known as "the Lord's Prayer" and "the Our Father." "Our Father" becomes "our Father-Mother," a grotesque distortion of the words of Jesus and one that can hardly be considered anything else but blasphemous. The expression "Lord" is used in the Hebrew Scriptures as the normal way to refer to the sacred Name, the Tetragrammaton YHWH, in order to avoid the danger of taking that Name in vain. It is also used in the great confession of the first Christians, "Jesus is Lord." "Lord," however, must be dropped from the newest (per)version of the Bible because, according to the editors, it suggests a ruling class of lords, which of course our modern democratic world cannot accept. To be consistent, of course, one would also have to reject God Himself, in order not to have to acknowledge Him as "Ruler of All." Oxford's substitute, "All-Highest," is also inferior, suggesting an attribute or a quality rather than the personal God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Affirmation of "diversity" of all kinds requires such idiocies as the elimination of "the right hand of the Majesty on

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high" (Hebrews 1:3), for the suggestion that the right hand is a place of honor might upset left-handed people (this left-handed editor, until his consciousness was raised, was not upset; in fact, he is not upset even now, no doubt an indication that he is so insensitive that he cannot even recognize derogatory insinuations that apply directly to him). "Darkness" must also be eliminated, for it might be offensive to dark-skinned people. (Will this rehabilitate the term "darkies," which up until now has been considered a bit condescending, to designate African-Americans?) What is lost, of course, is the love of the personal God, especially as it is expressed in the mystery of divine election: "Jacob have I loved but Esau have I hated" (Malachi 1:2f, cited by Paul in Romans 9:13).

According to Kraus, the editors sought to produce "a version of the biblical text that will enlarge the reader's vision of the great human community." Perhaps it does so, but the purpose and power of the Bible as actually written is "to make thee wise unto salvation" (II Timothy 3:15). The Gospel, according to Paul, "is the power of God unto salvation, to every one who believes, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16). Paul was referring to the Gospel as proclaimed and taught by Jesus and His disciples, not to the twisted texts produced by Oxford. It is interesting to observe that although earlier heretics such as the Gnostics of the second century could have derived considerable benefit by changing only a few words in John's Gospel, they did not do so: they gave their own interpretation to the words as they stood, but did not change them to suit themselves. Perhaps they had too much reverence for the actual texts, or perhaps they knew that too many people knew the texts too well to permit distorting alternations to get by.

Oxford University Press and its editors cannot escape the charge of intellectual dishonesty. To "translate" a text so that it says what you want it to say, not what the authors wrote and meant, is dishonest and intellectually irresponsible. The late Paul Tillich, certainly no fundamentalist, warned about making verbal or conceptual idols to suit individual tastes. To change the words of Jesus and call God by names of one's own choosing, names evocative of things specifically prohibited in Scripture such as goddess worship, is blasphemous. It is dangerous to forget that—at least in the words of the Bible as hitherto known—"God will not hold him guiltless who taketh his name in vain" (Exodus 20:7).

—*Harold O.J. Brown*

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Among the Home Folks

(Matthew 13:53-58)

by Harold McCurdy

Power surged through him, unexampled power:
The halt began to dance, the blind to see;
The madmen in their chains, the storms that tower
Over black waves, grew calm in Galilee;
Legions of demons fled and left men free.

The hungry were fed, the thirsty drank from fountains
Never opened before. Out of the press
He slipped away at times into the mountains
To pray alone and in the wilderness
Draw fresh reserves to cope with human distress.

They were astonished at him. Jairus's daughter
Rose at his touch from death. His disciples saw,
And trembled to see, their Master walking on water
To rescue them. The synagogues in awe
Heard him expound the knottier points of the Law.

They were astonished, yes, but not all shaken
To the hard footings of their cautious lives.
Most looked askance at him, would not be taken
In by his wonders. Peering out of their hives
Like hornets at bay, they whetted their little knives.

"Who is this miracle-worker, this more than Moses?
Isn't he Mary's son who made ox-yokes?
Brother to Simon and James and Judas and Joses?
His sisters, aren't they our neighbors, just plain folks?"
They elbowed out of the synagogue cracking jokes.

He sighed, and observed that power can be resisted,
That unfaith too has power, and waits in place
(Skeptical, cramped, hypocritical, twisted)
To stop up any conduit of God's grace.
—And from his kinsmen, sadly, he turned his face.

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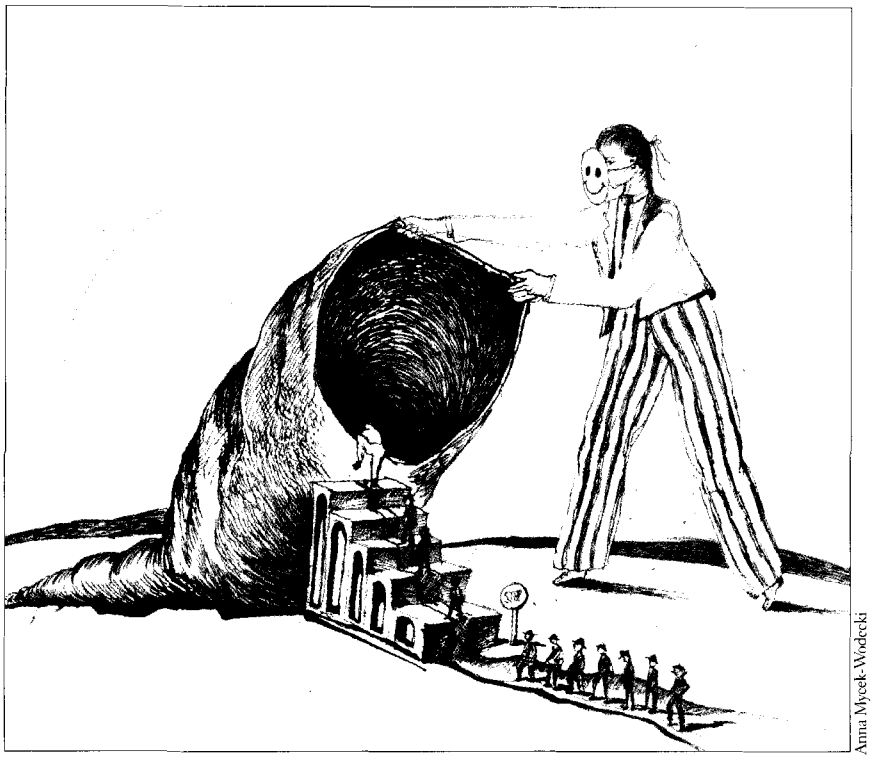

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

The Illusions of Democracy

by Thomas Fleming

We live by our opinions. While other people's opinions are called illusions, if they pose no threat to our interests, and prejudices if they do, we call our own opinions "truth" or principles, if we are fools: "the most positive men are the most credulous," as Pope observed, probably having scientists in mind. If we are more cautious, we prefer to speak of theories and hypotheses. However, most theories are—so far as we are concerned—mere opinions about which we know virtually nothing. We think that a roughly spherical earth orbits around the sun, but how many of us would know how to go about testing such a theory? I am told that sailors who navigate by the stars are still operating according to the Ptolemaic theory, which is more convenient, and for most of us the sun still appears to rise in the east and set in the west. The theory of humors lies buried just beneath the surface of everyday conversation about character, while the various schools of psychology have contributed little more than a few misunderstood clichés about complexes.

We laugh at the superstitions of peasants who believe that copulating in the field ensures fertility, but peasants are less subject, than civilized men, to illusions. The peasant, like the sailor and the hunter, is forever rubbing up against the brutality of nature, whose ways he has to observe, if he is to survive. His head may be filled with magical and religious nonsense, but he is a hardheaded realist who can read the seasons in the constellations and the flights of birds. He may, upon arising, smooth out the wrinkles from his bed to prevent a witch from working magic on the impression he has left, but he knows which herbs will cure a headache and which will poison his neighbor's goat.

We, on the other hand, live in a world of fantasies, some of which have a scientific validity that makes technology possible, while others are more ludicrous and less satisfying than sympathetic magic. The peasant teaches his children the facts and habits that will be necessary to their survival: how to speak their language and tell a story, how to make an arrow or a broom, what deeds won ancestors their glory and what brought them into disgrace. We, however, send our children to a school where they are taught theories of English grammar, theories of literary interpretation (New Criticism, Reader Response, feminist interpretation—it is all the same), and scientific theories they will never understand, much less apply. If they are told anything about their ancestors, it will only be to vilify them as a set of racist brutes who have made this earth a hell for women, children, and every color in the ethnic rainbow.

Many theories are practically harmless: what difference does it make if we are wrong about phlogiston or quantum mechanics? But many of them have the effect of clouding our minds, of blocking reality, of damaging our capacity to live in the world effectively. Grammatical theories, for example, as taught in

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school have excluded the teaching of English as a practical technique of expression; literary theories prevent us from enjoying fiction and poetry and from applying them to our own lives. Psychological and sociological theories—rooted in nothing more solid than verbal playfulness—may even corrupt our morals and stunt our sense of responsibility.

Among the most dangerous of our theoretical illusions are the political fantasies that can be summed up in words like democracy, equality, and natural rights; the principle of one man, one vote and the American tradition of self-government. No one who lives in the world with his eyes open can actually believe any of this, and I used to think that the American faith in democracy was one of those little mass hypocrisies that we all agree to promote as a matter of form, although we can barely keep from laughing, as Cicero says of Roman augurs taking the omens. That is what I used to think in my days of youthful idealism, but I was wrong. Americans have so little contact with reality that they are permitted to go through life like blind men who do not know they are blind.

Every once in a while, though, the country is rocked by some scandal or emergency. We call these periods a "crisis." Now a crisis is nothing more than an event that challenges our theoretical assumptions, an occasion of doubt, a chink in the dark prison of illusion through which a feeble ray of daylight streams. When the priests of Baal could not persuade their god to start a fire, that was a crisis; when Louis XVI tried to raise taxes and was told he did not have the power to do so, that was a crisis; when murderers go free, because they have the money to hire all the lawyers in the world, that is not a crisis, because everyone knows that there has always been one law for the rich and another for the poor, but when the rich murderer is black, and the verdict—and therefore his crime—is justified by an overwhelming number of black Americans, then some Americans begin to doubt the political illusions on which the regime rests.

Our fundamental political illusion goes by the name of political equality. "America is a country where every man can grow up to be President," and if not President, at least dogcatcher or juryman. Free elections and trial by jury were the institutional expressions of our legal and political equality. The predictable black response is: a black man can't get justice in this country; a black man has never had political equality with whites. This is true, albeit in a trivial sense. When conservatives try to respond that four decades of civil rights legislation and welfare programs have eliminated injustice, they are not only overstating their case; they are missing the point. The poor and powerless will never have full access to the political institutions that are owned by the rich and powerful. When the disabilities of race and culture are added to the condition of poverty, the result is an underclass whose members will only make their way to the top if they possess both the motivation and the skills required by a particular society. Kidnapped by a race of athletes, Woody Allen might become court fool but never a chief.

Whatever trust we are to put in race and IQ correlations, black achievements both in Africa and in North America give little indication that black people, taken statistically *en masse*, possess the kinds of abilities that are required for success in the modern world, and since the 1960's, the welfare state has constituted an additional disincentive to black achievement.

This is not to say that modern civilization is particularly admirable or that we should especially esteem the virtues of an executive or technocrat. In Joyce Cary's *Mr. Johnson*, it is made very plain that the African hero—however lazy and dishonest—is, in human terms, the superior of the English colonial officials. With the temperament of an artist, Johnson could never succeed in the stultifying colonial bureaucracy. It is the dullest sort of ethnocentrism to imagine that one's own group is a human benchmark. As Xenophanes observed in the sixth century B.C., the gods of the Thracians are red-haired and blue-eyed, while the Ethiopians' gods are snub-nosed and woolly-haired. The gods, concluded the poet, were beyond our comprehension. Today, we extend this agnosticism to people.

Of course white "racism" contributes to black failure, but if racism means nothing worse than naive ethnic prejudice, then virtually everyone in this world is either a racist or a hypocrite. It is normal and healthy to prefer your own group to strangers, and the liberal theory that tells us that xenophobia is wrong only poisons us with self-hatred. But even in a color-blind modern society, many blacks would not do as well as, say, Sicilians or Palestinians, and the inevitable result would be a political and legal system that appeared to privilege members of the Mafia and the PLO, when it was really only the age-old story of wealth and power. Even in the most purely republican societies, there is no way of preventing a rich celebrity from buying either a public office or a verdict. If we wish to protest, we shall be told—and quite correctly—that we are simple. "Be angry at the sun for shining," as Robinson Jeffers admonishes.

The acquittal of a wealthy entertainer, in a country that sends athletes into Congress and puts an actor in the White House, is hardly an occasion of surprise, though it must be said that in a better time, even George Washington would have been lynched out of the White House if the evidence against him were as solid as it is against Mr. Simpson. What is hard for so many middle-class Americans to stomach is the realization that they, despite the burdensome taxes they pay (a majority of our income going, one way or another, to government), constitute a legal and political underclass.

We have all known, for some time, that the children of European Americans would be discriminated against in hiring, college placement, and scholarships; that our culture and our identity were not protected by a regime that had criminalized insensitivity to race and perversity. Now we have to realize that the jury system itself—along with other Anglo-American ethnic artifacts, such as the prohibition on double jeopardy—has been corrupted by ethnic politics. The mere fact that white men were excluded in principle from the Simpson jury means that trial by jury—and all the other institutions of democracy—are dead letters. When one very distinguished foreign scholar told me that you simply could not have juries if "people like that" were admitted to them, he was not speaking primarily of race but of the caliber of humanity that serve, almost exclusively, as jurors. That one or two ordinary people might have doubts about the evidence is conceivable (especially in these days of public schooling), but 12? If the object was to give Mr. Simpson a jury of his peers, then the judge and prosecutor succeeded brilliantly: like Mr. Simpson himself, the 12 jurors represent the intellectual and moral nadir of our society; they are certain proof that democracy is not even theoretically possible in the United States.

For several years, I have been arguing that republican equality was only a temporary phase between systems based on status. In earlier times, the condition of nobility conferred both privileges and obligations, and if a nobleman was killed, the price for

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his life was higher than it was for a yeoman or a serf. Today, again, human lives are not equal: a child in the womb may be murdered with impunity, and a large majority of the black population apparently believes that the murder of white people is justified on the grounds of the general racism in American society. The political establishment—including the President of the United States—concurs: the same Bill Clinton who expressed outrage at the outcome of the trial of LAPD officers accused of beating Rodney King reacted to the O.J. Simpson verdict by telling Americans they had to accept the outcome of a trial-by-jury.

It would be a vulgar mistake to conclude that blacks had become a privileged class within the United States. They do, of course, absorb a disproportionately high amount of welfare disbursements; they do commit over half the violent crimes in the country, and while in most of these cases other blacks are the victims, it is also true that 90 percent of the victims of interracial crime are white. But no one who visits a black neighborhood can possibly imagine that these people constitute an elite class. They are serfs, just like the rest of us, whose lives are valuable only insofar as they serve the needs and interests of their rulers.

The use of foreigners and ethnic minorities as instruments of terror and oppression is hardly a new strategy. The Turks used Albanians against Serbs and Kurds against Armenians; the English sent Hessian soldiers against the American colonists, partly because they could rely on the Germans not to feel kinship with the rebels. Aristotle and Herodotus both testify that it was the practice of ancient tyrants to champion the rights of the weak against the strong, because the strong—male property-owners capable of bearing arms—posed a threat to their authority. The inability of the regime to suppress ethnic gangs—black, Chicano, Asian—would be surprising, if we did not already know that gang violence serves the interest of a ruling class that would like to establish a national police force.

Cut off from the realities of existence, Americans are susceptible to utterly fantastic theories. It is their addiction to theories that has blinded modern Americans to the realities around them. Isolated in the Kremlin, Stalin thought you could produce frost-resistant strains of wheat by exposing them to cold, and his credulity might have destroyed Russian agriculture. If a simple peasant put his trust in such a theory, he would either wise up quickly or starve to death. In simpler times, the peasants may have loved or hated their king, but they did not pretend to themselves that they had equal rights with kings and barons. If a liberal aristocrat had tried to convince a peasant of the *ancien régime* that he enjoyed political equality with the rich, the poor man would have been outraged at the imposture and assumed, probably correctly, that the nobleman was after his land or his daughter. Today, however, the peasant's descendants in republican France or democratic America willingly hand over their daughters and their land to the aristocrats who have bewildered them with political fantasies. An exaggeration? How many Americans actually own, unmortgaged, any property that can give them economic security? How many of them are able to protect the chastity of their daughters either from the erotic propaganda of the public schools or from the young male predators who seduce and assault them?

Most Americans are convinced that they live in a democracy. Who can blame them? They have been told nothing else throughout their lives. Until a few years ago, there had been a remnant of conservatives who insisted that the Founding Fathers had established a republic, but the constant jeers from liberals have apparently forced them to drop this affectation. We are all democrats now, especially the Republicans.

The theory of democracy makes much of free elections, political parties, and rights legislation, but alongside of this largely irrelevant theory there is the democratic reality of American life or, at least, of some American life. In the days of Andrew Jackson, the word *democracy* did not always refer to a theory or system of government; it sometimes was used to designate the common people, the classes who had no particular wealth or privilege. These were no mere serfs or peasants; they were independent and substantial members of the community. They owned land and shops; they provided for their own families; they contributed to the support of their churches and to the relief of the poor; they expected nothing from the rich, including the state whose representatives were almost always wealthy, and in return they were not expected to tip their hat to the squire.

A man with a good-sized farm could consider himself a gentleman and stand for parish elections, but he generally had better things to do than to meddle in state politics or national elections. For the Jeffersonian, the deeper meaning of democracy had little connection with the nice formalities of majority rule or constitutional federalism, and everything to do with minding his own business and getting on in the world on his own terms. He might believe in the principle of majority rule, but only in appropriate circumstances: a father did not poll wife and children for their opinions on what crops to plant or what price to charge for the shoes he made, and he never dreamed that the entire population of the United States could be polled to decide whether a county might teach religion in its schools or restrict the franchise to free white male adults. For the Jeffersonians, democracy did not mean the right of a general majority to oppress particular minorities—on this point Calhoun is the truest of the Jeffersonians—but the right of the little communities of family and parish and county to govern their own affairs without the intrusion of well-intentioned (at least they always claim to be well-intentioned) outsiders.

The tragedy of American history is that the theory and the practice of democracy were at odds with each other, almost from the very first. The theory leads to the Jacobinism of Tom Paine and Woodrow Wilson, both of whom were quite willing to meddle in other people's business in the name of democracy, while the practice of everyday democracy is exemplified in community schools, town meetings, and committees of vigilance—all of which would be outlawed by theoretically democratic legislation. Just as linguistic and literary theories undermine real language and real literature, so democratic theory has subverted the practical democracy of everyday life.

In the old democracy of America, O.J. Simpson might have been executed for marrying a woman of another race, but—setting the question of race aside—he probably would have been acquitted (if he had ever been brought to trial in the first place) for killing an adulteress. Everyday democracies do not intrude into the household, even in a case of murder, where it is an affair of family honor. Today, on the other hand, men are put on trial for sexually assaulting their wives, even if the couple are Christians who must acknowledge and pay what St. Paul called the conjugal debt. On the theory of equality, no one has the right to mind his own business, so long as a majority in Congress, elected by a tiny fraction of the population in gerrymandered districts, in elections whose rules are rigged by the

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two parties and whose outcomes are determined by bribery, is induced (bullied or bribed) to pass a bill. In many cases, Congress is not even consulted by the federal judges and bureaucrats who have taken law and public administration into their own hands.

When liberal theorists like Seymour Martin Lipset speak of democracy, they do not mean either everyday democracy or even majority rule; what they have in mind is the vast coercive apparatus of a state that regulates every moment of our private and public lives according to a theory that no one understands. When, in a classic work of obfuscation (*Political Man*), Professor Lipset faces, however briefly, the light of day, he concedes that high voter turnout is not necessarily a good thing for democracy. Similarly, when the Trilateral Commission in a 1975 report on *The Crisis in Democracy* spoke of the postwar American regime, their version of democracy was a conspiracy of elite classes that might have been dreamed up by Robert Welch:

> For twenty years after World War II presidents operated with the cooperation of a series of informal governing coalitions. Truman made a point of bringing a substantial number of nonpartisan soldiers, Republican bankers, and Wall Street lawyers into his administration. . . . Eisenhower in part inherited this coalition and was in part almost its creation. He also mobilized a substantial number of midwestern businessmen into his administration and established close and effective working relationships with the Democratic leadership of Congress. . . .
>
> Both Johnson and his successor were viewed with a certain degree of suspicion by many of the more liberal and intellectual elements which might normally contribute their support to the administration. The Vietnam War and, to a lesser degree, racial issues divided elite groups as well as the mass public. In addition, the number and variety of groups whose support might be necessary had increased tremendously by the 1960's. Truman had been able to govern the country with the cooperation of a relatively small number of Wall Street lawyers and bankers. By the mid-1960's, the sources of power in society had diversified tremendously, and this was no longer possible.

This report, authored in 1975 by Michael Crozier, Samuel Huntingdon, and Joji Watanuki (like Herodotus I include the names to preserve the memory of infamous men), suggests that by the 1970's the main political problem, at least as politics is conceived of by the Trilateral Commission, was how to reconstitute the stable governing coalition of the Truman and Eisenhower years. The Vietnam War, among other things, had split the elite class, opening up American politicals to the kind of dissidence and protest that had characterized labor struggles and populist movements in the transitional period between the Civil War and the New Deal. The task ahead was to make the country (and the world) safe for "a relatively small number of Wall Street lawyers and bankers."

How they did it would be a long story, but Mancur Olson has done a superb job of analyzing much of the phenomenon of interest group politics, which is at the heart of modern democratic systems. However, that they did it cannot be doubted by anyone who compares the public reaction to Vietnam with the public responses first to the war against Iraq and the war against the Bosnian Serbs. There is no substantial opposition to these lawless and brutal wars, neither from the political class that runs the government nor from the information class that controls the media and the universities. And there is not a drop of irony, when Presidents Bush and Clinton have described their dirty little campaigns in the language of global democracy.

Vast numbers of real Americans are still attempting to conduct honorable lives in the spirit of everyday democracy. To some extent we have been bought off with middle-class welfare programs that undermine the moral foundations of our independence, but many of us are doing the best we can to take care of ourselves and the people who depend on us, even under the increasingly hostile pressure of high taxes and intrusive government.

The theory of democracy is on the point of making the reality impossible, as fewer and fewer managers exert control over more and more of the world's population and resources. If the fictive support of 250 million Americans can justify forced busing, affirmative action, the ban on school prayer, and the rights of AIDS-infected homosexual doctors to practice medicine in public hospitals, just imagine what our ruling class will be able to do when it speaks in the name of a global population of billions. c

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Kulchur

by Harold McCurdy

Our next-of-kin, the chimpanzees,
Drag chattering monkeys from the trees

And snatch chimp babies from the crooked
Arms of their mothers, to eat uncooked.

Their genes and ours are so much the same
(Over 90 percent), where is the shame

If, as the talk is, some Chinese
Dine on aborted fetuses?

They say it's a diet that freshens the skin
And keeps the wrinkles from coming in.

We in America freshen the brains
Of Alzheimer patients with fetal remains,

Advanced anthropoids, refined by reliance
("Doctor knows best") on medical science.

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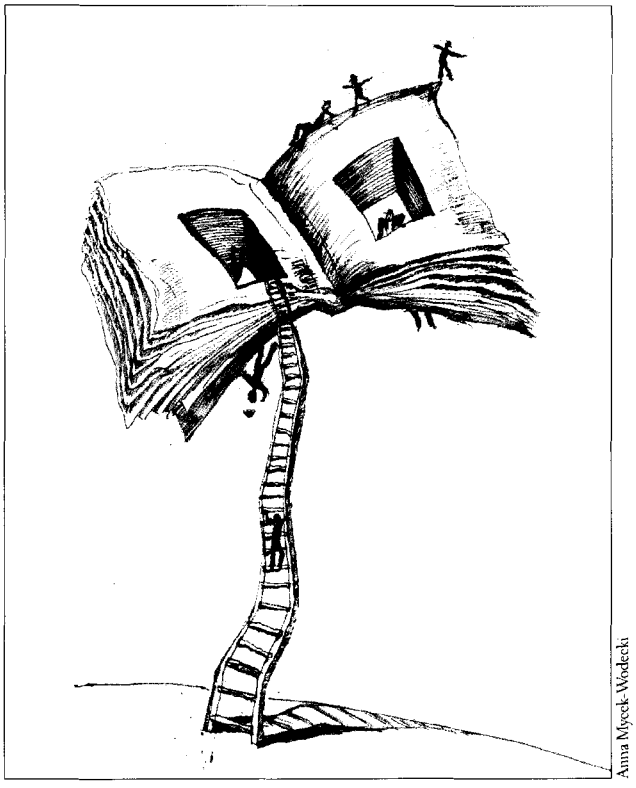
Coleridge and the Battle of Waterloo

Critical Theory Among the English

by George Watson



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

There is a story told about the late Roland Barthes. Once, in his Paris seminar on critical theory, a British visitor bravely remarked that something he had just said sounded rather like a point made by Coleridge in the *Biographia Literaria*. An embarrassed silence followed. Then Barthes, in his ponderous voice, spoke: "One can never be sure what is not to be found in the writings of the Anglo-Saxons."

The story is illustrative. If the British have no great reputation as theorists in the present age, whether in continental Europe or the United States, it is because there is a damning feeling that, having dedicated themselves to empiricism with Locke's *Essay* of 1690, if not earlier, they are naturally hostile to theory. It is a view contradictory in itself, since empiricism was plainly a theory, good or bad; Locke and his successors argued against a lively opposition; and whatever the merits of that long argument, it does not suggest theoretical incuriosity. On the other hand, there is a healthy suspicion that English theorists may occasionally have got there first, and that an insular civilization is puzzlingly unsynchronized with its neighbors. It is neither old-fashioned nor new-fashioned—just odd. As Frank Kermode has recently remarked, William Empson in his *Structure of Complex Words* (1951) anticipated Deconstruction by a whole generation.

That is a suspicion worth encouraging: it is often, though not always, right. English criticism began with theory, it is easily forgotten, its first notable work, Sir Philip Sidney's *Apologie for Poetrie*, being composed as early as the 1580's. That makes literary theory a lot older in England than literary history. If the earliest notable work of literary history in the language was Samuel Johnson's *Lives of the Poets* (1779-81)—the earliest, at all events, still read for its original purpose—then theory in England is two centuries older than literary history. Coleridge's *Biographia*, too, is plainly a work of theory, which makes the alleged modernity of critical theory hard to fathom. In the days when I haunted theoretical classes in Paris, some 30 years ago and more, and critical conferences in the United States and elsewhere, it was always assumed that literary history was a traditional activity and critical theory the latest thing, and as a literary historian I was expected to stand before it humble and amazed, uncomplainingly accepting the title of a traditionalist. The trouble was that I knew too much literary history to do any such thing.

So let the word go forth. The literary history of vernacular

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literatures is a highly recent activity of the Western mind. It is late 18th century. Literary theory, by contrast, is ancient. It has been there since Plato and Aristotle, even if its life over two thousand years is less than continuous. Though more literate than numerate, I cannot accept that 200 years is longer than 2,000; and in light of all that, Roland Barthes' disinclination to read Coleridge takes on a new and sinister aspect. It was not just ignorance, one suspects, but willful ignorance. There have been theorists in recent years who have refused to read the masterpieces of past ages because they were afraid, and with reason, that their own self-image of modernity would be tarnished if they did.

And yet there *is* something idiosyncratic about British theory, and the real charge is not insularity. An island is wide open to commerce and ideas, after all; for centuries it was easier to travel by sea than by land. Sir Philip Sidney borrowed many of his ideas from Italian humanists of his own century; Coleridge, who was the first English man of letters to know German and to feel the impact of German philosophy, probably read Kant as early as 1798-99, when he spent nine months in Germany, mainly at Göttingen, less than 20 years after Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* appeared in 1781. That is likely to be earlier than any study of Kant by a French man of letters.

The *Biographia Literaria* is a very German book, in its metaphysics, and most of it was written in the summer of 1815, at the time of the Battle of Waterloo, when an Anglo-German army under Wellington and Blücher overthrew Napoleon. It may not be wholly fanciful to see a connection. Coleridge loathed Napoleon. In his tenth chapter, he called him a vulture and his rule a consummate despotism, and he plainly associated that despotism with the bloodthirsty ideals of Jacobinism and the French reign of terror. But then by 1815 he was a Tory eager to understate his own youthful revolutionary enthusiasms, and the *Biographia* is a rootedly conservative book, dark with fears of a revived Jacobinism. "The poison-tree is not dead, though the sap may for a season have subsided to its roots." His mind by then was darkly haunted by the dire effects of abstract speculation and arrogant nationalism.

So critical theory can be conservative: a fact seldom mentioned in our times; and it is perhaps not wholly coincidental that the summer that saw the death of revolutionary France at Waterloo unwittingly saw the death of critical theory. Coleridge's *Biographia* started nothing in its century, at home or abroad. To his deep regret, it failed; it was, so to speak, his Waterloo. It took two years even to publish, because of printing accidents; and when it appeared in 1817, it was neglected by the reviews and failed to sell. Even Wordsworth, its hero, disliked it and claimed not to have read it through, and there is evidence that the Victorians did not admire it. In a letter of December 1843, John Ruskin revealed that he did not know of its existence. So the book marks the beginning of a silent century of critical theory; and more died at Waterloo, it might be said, than the Grand Army of Napoleon.

What was it? The question cannot be easily answered, and no answer is likely to concern English criticism alone. Critical theory had been a continuous activity in 18th-century France and England, among the *philosophes* and elsewhere. But it had been an amateur tradition of drawing-room conversation, where the critical theories of Addison, Diderot, or Sir Joshua Reynolds were discussed over tea cups and glasses of claret. Boswell's *Life of Johnson* shows that happening. It was emphatically not an academic tradition, anywhere in Europe.

Coleridge, too, it is easy to forget, was an amateur. He had left Cambridge without a degree, as a young revolutionary, and was never to settle long into any profession except journalism. He had already witnessed Napoleon's first defeat, in 1814, when he began to write the *Biographia*, and by then he may have associated Enlightenment ideas of critical theory with the discredited ideas of the French Revolution. But his book deals more largely with the new German school, with Kant, Schlegel, and Schelling—professional philosophers and critics whom he rightly saw as the new masters of critical debate. They were not men of the drawing-room but of the lecture-platform and the learned journal, and they had philosophized criticism in a way that made the Enlightenment tradition suddenly look facile and glib.

It is notable, however, that the silent century of critical theory that Coleridge unintentionally began in England was silent in France and Germany too. The German tradition had plenty of critical methodology in the 19th century, as in Dilthey, and some brilliant oddities like Nietzsche's *Birth of Tragedy* (1872); but a continuous tradition of critical theory is nowhere to be found, and the British silence is a European silence. The reasons can only be guessed at. One possibility is that the marriage Coleridge had tried to arrange between amateur criticism and professional philosophy in the new German style looked too awkward to work more than spasmodically. It lacked, inevitably, an audience and a market. The *Biographia* is not a book for the academy, and C.S. Lewis used to remark that if it were submitted as a doctoral thesis, he would have to fail it. No very profound admirer of the doctoral process, Lewis may have meant that whimsically, as a compliment; but it signalizes the important truth that it is a misshapen work and highly uneven in tone, sometimes anecdotal and sometimes scholastic and obscure, at once modest and self-justifying, timid and bold. Its own century, which was skeptical of self-revelation and baffled by German academic philosophy, simply could not take it in.

The silent century of critical theory ended first in Britain. In 1923, C.K. Ogden and I.A. Richards issued their collaborative work *The Meaning of Meaning*, to be followed in short order by Richards's *Principles of Literary Criticism* (1924) and *Practical Criticism* (1929), which were internationally influential and led to his appointment at Harvard in 1939. So England led the world in critical theory, for the first and last time, between the two world wars, and it was in England that critical theory became an academic activity, though it was at first confined to Cambridge. That is what led to the lack of synchrony between England and its European neighbors: continental indifference to British critical theory in the 1930's. When Saussure became fashionable among French critics in the 1950's and later, some 40 years and more after his death, it was assumed that structuralism was something the British had failed to notice. In fact he had already been dismissed by Ogden and Richards in *The Meaning of Meaning*, a whole generation earlier; and by the 1950's, his *Cours de linguistique générale* (1916) had long since been absorbed into the linguistic theories of the English-speaking world. It was neglected, by then, not because it was avant-garde but because it was old hat. Our understanding of modern critical theory has never recovered from a failure to understand that simple fact; critical theory was suddenly supposed to be a French thing, and soon after a French-American thing; and it now survives better in the United States than in

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France. When ideas die, a wit once remarked, they go to America. With the new age of international conferences on critical theory, nobody thought Sir Philip Sidney had anything much to do with the matter, or even Coleridge or I.A. Richards. I suggest it is time we did.

As Roland Barthes said, one never knows what is not to be found in the writings of the Anglo-Saxons. Consider, for example, a book by a learned Dutch theorist, Douwe Fokkema, *Theories of Literature in the Twentieth Century* (1977), where I am politely attacked for having suggested that one can know what terms like romanticism and tragedy mean without being able to define them. That is a claim I made in *The Study of Literature* (1969), a book that regrettably appeared in the same year as Wittgenstein's posthumous masterpiece *On Certainty*, which I was consequently unable to use. Wittgenstein, being Viennese Jewish, hardly counts as an Anglo-Saxon, even if he spent most of his adult life in England. But his point, in the notes on certainty he scribbled in Cambridge shortly before his death in April 1951, was that all thinking beings possess certain knowledge and need it, since even their uncertainties depend on certainties; that one understands words less by verbal definition than by use; and that in any contested case, it is the instance that takes priority over definitions. "What would get judged by what here?" as his famous challenge in *On Certainty* put it. To give a blindingly simple literary instance: if a proferred definition of tragedy were to exclude *King Lear* or admit *As You Like It*, one would not reallocate the plays but scrap the definition. *Lear* is known with certainty to be a tragedy without any definition; you judge definitions against instances, not the other way around.

The point is already in Coleridge, an author Wittgenstein is not known to have admired. "On the immediate which dwells in every man," he wrote in the *Biographia*, "all the certainty of our knowledge depends." That is a very Wittgensteinian point, using his word "certainty" to similar purpose. You cannot even begin to think without being certain of something. When you learn the two-times table at school, for example, or are told in infancy it is wrong to tell lies, you see with instant certainty that it is so. It is less an act of discovery than of recognition, like learning to walk. Science is no exception. Every experimental scientist, as a British scientist remarked some years ago, knows that he can use color-terms without first proving them to be right. That was Harold Jeffreys in *Scientific Inference* (1973). If the analytical chemist or botanist were to reject color-terms, Jeffreys argued, he could no longer report or use his own sensations. "But he knows quite well that color sensation is good enough for his purpose." In other words, scientists as well as critics assert, and rightly and with certainty assert, what they know they cannot prove: for example, that grass is green. So critics, and for that matter moral philosophers, are not different from scientists when they assert what they cannot prove. If we had to prove and agree on the foundations of knowledge of literature or morality, or of the physical sciences, we could not even begin to study such matters, still less progress in such studies. We are right, then, on occasion, to believe what we cannot define or prove.

Dr. Fokkema in his *Theories of Literature* objects to this unashamedly antidefinitional view, quoting from my *Study of Literature*, on the ground that it would "make us speechless, and the results of our investigations impervious to criticism." But surely it is the other way around. It is the universal demand for definition, or the denial of what Coleridge called "the immediate which dwells in every man," that leaves the critic speechless in the sense of being incapable of assertion. Unfortunately, it leaves him capable of talking without asserting; and that has become all too possible in an age of radical skepticism recently erected by critical theory, as anyone who has ever attended a deconstructionist lecture must know. One can say, and at enormous length, that there is nothing to be said. That was the desperate point of Jacques Derrida's *Glas* (1974), or *The Knell*, meaning the death-knell of Western civilization; and those who deny Coleridge's point, or Wittgenstein's, about the immediacy of knowledge are less often rendered speechless than vacuous; it is those who accept it, by contrast, who do real work. *"Travaillons sans raisonner,"* says Voltaire at the close of *Candide* (1759), showing that you do not need to be an Anglo-Saxon to take the point: let us work without asking why. The critic, like the scientist and the moralist, can only work at all because he begins with certainties which he does not need to prove.

Coleridge returned to the point often. In the first chapter of the *Biographia*, for example, he praised his old schoolmaster for having shown him as a boy that poetry (no less than science) is a cognitive activity:

> I learnt from him that poetry, even that of the loftiest and, seemingly, that of the wildest odes, had a logic of its own as severe as that of science; and more difficult because more subtle, more complex, and dependent on more, and more fugitive, causes.

This is as profound a remark as any ever made about poetry, but it is regrettably concise and needs to be expanded. If the logic of a poem is as severe as that of a scientific proposition, it is nonetheless severe in a wholly distinct sense—"a logic *of its own*"; distinct, in that it is more subtle, complex, and "fugitive," as Coleridge puts it, meaning fleeting and indefinable; partly, no doubt, because it does not characteristically deal in technical terms that are subject to verbal definition. It is not an objection to the truth of a poem, accordingly, to conclude that one cannot say what it is, just as it is not an objection to our knowledge of color or of palatal taste—knowing how to tell coffee from tea, for example, and blindfolded—that one cannot give a defining account of what one knows. Truth is wider than account-giving, in fact, and we all know more than we can say. To be unable to answer questions like "How do you know the poem means that?" or "How do you know it is good?" is not conclusive to the charge that one does not know. Dame Maggie Smith, when asked (as she often is) about the art of acting, declines to answer, replying "It is just something I do." But nobody thinks it follows from her refusal or inability to answer that she does not know how to act.

Coleridge's profound recognition of silent knowledge and its significance could be pressed further. Prunella Scales, to quote another actress, has told how she occasionally allows herself to be persuaded to give an address on the art of acting, and finds for several evenings that she cannot do it. Or consider the following instance. I know English better than French, which I speak only as a foreigner. But because I learned French late, I would be better at giving an account of its grammatical rules than those of English. On the other hand, my English is right, and reliably right, and my French is not; if asked whether a sentence is possible in English, for example, I can reply with cer-

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tainty, whereas with a French sentence I could offer only a tentative and unreliable opinion. In that case, it is clear, an ability to define is not evidence of knowledge, relatively speaking, but of ignorance. Any dependence on grammatical rules is likely to be evidence of inadequate knowledge; any dependence on the rules of acting, or even an excessive consciousness of such rules, is likely to spoil a performance; anyone who needs a definition of tragedy to be sure that *King Lear* is one could have only a poor sense of plays in general and of Shakespeare in particular. Such reliance on rules is always evidence of a lack of acquaintance; and to rely on the literary definitions of others, like Northrop Frye's in his *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957), is to put oneself back at the elementary rule-learning stage of acquiring a foreign language. It is no doubt knowledge, of a sort. But it is the nursery-slope of knowledge.

It is remarkable that anyone who argues in that way is likely to be thought in a state of silent desperation. Dr. Fokkema has suggested that I am left speechless: that there is nothing, if you believe that, to be said. I hope these words are living proof that this is not so. I am not left with nothing to say; and if a great actress like Maggie Smith prefers to say nothing about acting, that is not because she knows nothing. It is more likely to be because she knows too much, and knows how subtle and fugitive it is.

The word "intuition" is commonly invoked here, usually with the implication that it renders all uses of language superfluous. In other words, it is imagined that the critic is faced with the stark choice of offering definitions or saying nothing. But that is a misunderstanding. Coleridge, when he spoke of the immediacy of knowledge, meant something intuitive, but visitors like Carlyle to his home at Highgate were far from thinking him speechless. Nor did they think he was failing to assert anything. His admirers, similarly, of whom I am one, are not usually thought of as taciturn. Wittgenstein is not usually thought of as someone with nothing to say, and he was a highly antidefinitional philosopher. A belief is silent knowledge, or intuition, does not require one to believe that all knowledge is silent; there may still be plenty to be said. If the logic of a poem is subtle, complex, and fugitive, then there are subtleties to be unraveled and complexities to be disentangled. That is what criticism does; and one can believe it worth doing without believing that it does everything.

One thought, one grace, one wonder at the least Which into words no virtue can digest, as Marlowe once put it, placing the words (not very plausibly) into the mouth of Tamburlaine. He was citing the ancient principle of the grace beyond the reach of art. Like the taste of coffee, that poetic grace or excellence is known to be there even though it eludes definition; and it is because it eludes definition that so much needs to be said about it. If the matter were simple enough to be definable, one would define and pass on, which is how dull people respond to dull questions. The real critic looks, lingers, and listens, knowing that the laws of criticism are of modest scope and interest—no more than "leading strings for infants," as A.E. Housman put it in his 1911 Cambridge inaugural, "crutches for cripples and . . . straitwaistcoats for maniacs." Literature, as he knew, is beyond all laws.

That point, too, was made by Coleridge, and in the year before Waterloo. "On the Principles of Genial Criticism" (1814) makes a case for critical objectivity with lapidary simplicity, instancing not a poem, for once, but an antique statue, the Apollo Belvedere in the Vatican. The Apollo is "not beautiful because it pleases," Coleridge argues, "it pleases us because it is beautiful." That puts the case in a nutshell. A work of art is known to be excellent, not just thought to be so—it pleases because it is beautiful, and not the other way around—and critical judgment is a kind of knowledge and not a mere response or matter of opinion.

The commonest objections to that view are not persuasive. That judgments can be wrong is no objection, since it is of the nature of objective inquires that judgments can be right or wrong. That one can offer no sufficient grounds is no objection, since it is common, as the scientific use of color-terms illustrates, to be unable to give sufficient grounds for knowledge. That critics disagree is no objection, since experts often disagree about highly objective questions like the shape of the earth or the population of China. That other cultures would think otherwise is no objection, since there are cultures that think the earth flat rather than round, it is said, and yet round is what it is. Any knowledge, after all, requires a background of experience: the bafflement of a Hottentot before a work of classical sculpture like the Apollo Belvedere is no more significant than my ignorance of whatever arts he may possess. I should be baffled in a chemistry laboratory, for that matter, but that is no reason to doubt that chemistry is an objective inquiry. Knowledge needs knowledge, and you would no more take poetic advice from someone who has not read poems than advice about coffee from someone who is drinking his first cup. The playwright Emlyn Williams used to tell how, as an Oxford freshman, he was asked about the college coffee by a fellow undergraduate after lunch. "I don't know," he replied, "I've only had tea before."

Some day, no doubt, literary studies will return to the wisdom of Coleridge and see how it helps. But his Waterloo of criticism has proved costly, and the silent century that broke a tradition of critical theory has left the literary world ignorant and theoretically credulous, over-ready to confuse knowledge with definition and easily persuaded that in literature there is nothing to be certainly known. There is a lot to be known, and Coleridge is one of those who can show how much. As Roland Barthes remarked in his Paris seminar, one can never be sure what is not to be found in the writings of the Anglo-Saxons. c

LIBERAL ARTS

PASSING THE BUCK

According to a recent edition of the *European*, doctors in Europe may soon escape the imbroglio of "mercy-killing": "The row over euthanasia may have reached a compromise in a report by the Royal Dutch Medical Association (RDMA) which calls for mercy killing candidates to end their own lives rather than rely on doctors to do it for them."

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Postmodernism, Theory, and the End of the Humanities

by E. Christian Kopff

For more than a decade now, Christopher Norris has been writing clear and informed discussions of where deconstruction and other versions of critical theory in the humanities are headed. The clarity of his accounts has been a public service, since few of the philosophers and literary and cultural theorists he discusses write clearly. Stanley Corngold actually praised "Sartre's deliberate antibourgeois refusal to write well . . . that has proven congenial to [Yale's Paul] De Man." They could write well if they wanted to, but that would mean giving in to the false standards of Western civilization, the capitalist, colonialist, totalizing oppressor that has given them tenure. For years Norris defended the leading writers of Critical Theory from accusations that their deconstructions of logocentric (or phallogocentric) texts from Plato to Husserl were trapping reader and text and the humanities as a whole in a Skinner box of language from which there was no escape and into which ethics and politics appeared only to be revealed as an illusion created by a specter which called itself the Will to Truth, but was in fact Nietzsche's Will to Power. As the years went by and as each generation, lasting about two or three years in this rapidly changing world, advanced by deconstructing the hidden premises of the previous generation, it became clearer and clearer that "that way madness lies." In a series of recent books, of which the latest is *Truth and the Ethics of Criticism* (1994), Norris has denounced the latest manoeuvres of the "Deconstructive Turn" to which he devoted so many informative books. Like Daddy Warbucks in *Mad* magazine's parody of Little Orphan Annie, our hero may have shown up "just after the nick of time."

Theory triumphed in the humanities. Position after position, even entire departments, like Duke's English faculty, went over to the new way of thinking. Deconstruction and feminism turned their back on philological method and archival research. Even the nod proferred these scholarly tools by the neo-Marxist New Historicism was largely, well, theoretical. The effect on the humanities in America's colleges and universities has been impressive. In the last 20 years, majors in English and Classics have declined by about 30 percent. (History has lost 45 percent of its majors over that period.) Classics majors once scored an average of 50 points higher on the Graduate Record Exams than English majors, but no longer. (Classics' numbers declined; English's numbers have remained the same.) When positions in the humanities become available, deans often give them to departments in the physical or biological sciences, or to trendy social science departments, such as Ethnic Studies or Women's Studies.

This lemming march to destruction affected not only the numbers of majors (after all, we are still teaching nonmajors English Composition and Greek Mythology), but also the moral basis of the humanities. In every society we make sense of our lives by telling not only our own story, but the story or stories of our group, our nation, our culture. The Postmodernists denounced this cultural necessity as indoctrination into an oppressive and illusory "Meta-Narrative." They insisted that language has no relation to any sort of real world, where we live and move and have our being. We are all trapped in the funhouse of language, which shapes what we think or can think.

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The highest moral command, perhaps the only one, is to respect the Otherness, the alterity of every Other in the world. Imposing our metanarrative on others is intellectual colonialism, as bad as, no, worse than the literal colonialism of the European empires of the 19th century. A passion to show up each earlier generation's metanarrative, its indifference to alterity and the Other, became a feeding frenzy. The intellectual waters turned red with the Oedipodean slaughter of the textual fathers.

The early promise of the first generation of heroes, Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Paul de Man, was to be fulfilled in the abolition of Platonism, capitalism, and patriarchy, the disappearance of the subject and the author. In 1989, however, it was Soviet communism that disappeared. A profound cultural despair filled the European scene. One by one, the intellectual heroes were found with feet of clay. A diligent Belgian archivist showed that De Man had written 170 articles for the leading newspaper in Brussels during the Nazi occupation, including a major piece for their anti-Jewish issue. Foucault turned from intellectual archaeology and genealogy to a study of the social construction of sex. It was no purely intellectual breakthrough. When he visited homosexual bathhouses in San Francisco, he indulged himself as he did not dare to do in Paris. Norris laments that he died just as his work was beginning to show an appreciation for the critical evaluation of evidence. The knowledge that a man is dying of AIDS concentrates his mind wonderfully. Barthes also passed on, leaving for posthumous publication what his editors called his linguistic studies in North Africa, page after page of which recorded what little Moroccan boys said while he was having sex with them.

Paul de Man had declared that history, and presumably biography as well, is only "a written text." The postmodernists ignored the moral context in which their movement throve and concentrated on showing that our pride in the accomplishments of science, technology, democracy, literature were fatally flawed by our failure to appreciate the unique specialness, Otherness, absolute alterity of other cultures and other people. Eighteenth-century Enlightenment Europe thought it could not only dominate the world politically, but also understand it intellectually. The second was a worse ambition than the first. The suicidal insanity of the two world wars and the Cold War that followed ended Western schemes for world domination. (At least for public consumption. America still seeks to be a world leader and to impose its presence by means of gunboat humanitarianism from Somalia to Haiti.) We still think that we can explain the rest of the world. Palestinian scholar Edward Said argued in *Orientalism* and other books that we had merely turned the East into an Other, constructed out of what we were not, not out of the facts. Feminists argued that scientific statements about women were similarly constructed out of male confusion of the desire to know with the desire to dominate. Foucault spoke of power/knowledge.

Foucault wrote passionately of the suppression of the Otherness of the mad or the criminal. Feminists like Julia Kristeva sought a fuller life for oppressed women. Edward Said showed that colonialism's oppression of the Easterner was not just the result of this or that corrupt regime or mistaken policy, but rooted in the Western Enlightenment's delusion of a universally valid knowledge, that ended up amounting to self-aggrandizement. But if we are trapped in the closed box of language, with no objective reality to correct, falsify, or confirm our notions, on what basis do we condemn or approve? The Deconstructive Turn was good at showing up false certainties in science, progress, and other Western accomplishments. On what basis did it condemn the West for being trapped in its own linguistic conventions, when that is the human condition? If there is no objective reality, physical or moral, how can we denounce, or even criticize, the Holocaust Revisionist for his denial of the gas chambers, or Israel for her treatment of the Palestinians, or men for their subjection of women?

Norris has worked hard to find evidence that some leaders have refused to follow the dogma of the sovereignty of the linguistic all the way to the end of its barren cul-de-sac. The bloody ethnic conflicts of the last few years have shaken Edward Said. Julia Kristeva has declared in her recent books on the immigrant as Other that we all have an Other inside us, which we must confront and understand, and if we can do that with ourselves, why not with more conventional Others, North African immigrants or women? She has even gone so far as to declare that Nazi Germany went wrong not through obsession with Enlightenment ideals of general humanity, but through too great an insistence on the reality of the local self and the Other. The paragraph in which she ventured this view sent shockwaves through the critical establishment. Although true believers in the linguistic Iron Curtain between "reality" and language have long since moved beyond oppressive bourgeois morality on almost every subject from plagiarism to buggery, there remains one moral certainty: Nazi Germany was evil. As Leo Strauss pointed out, the *reductio ad Hitlerum* has become the facile refutation of choice. When Kristeva played the Nazi card, she was challenging the rest of the players to fold then and there.

She was at least partly right. German intellectual life was influenced by historical visions that insisted on the profound differences between cultures. Many of today's cries against the unfairness of judging other cultures by our standards can be traced back to Spengler's *Decline of the West*, where he attempts not without success to show that even so seemingly objective a science as geometry functioned differently in antiquity and the modern Western, or Faustian, culture. Still the great totalitarian regimes, German National Socialism, Russian Communism, and American Liberalism, each took from the Enlightenment an ideal of objective truth by which they could judge the world. For Hitler's government, that truth was found in biology, and those judged unworthy by the standards of that objective science could be killed. The Marxist took economics from the Enlightenment, and so the small landowner had to die. In each case, we can see that the Nazi killing the Jew and the Marxist killing the small farmer was killing the refutation of his theory. Liberalism believes in the individual, whose natural or human rights trump all other suits. There is no more complete refutation of that vision than the family and within the family the pregnant woman, an individual filled with new and different life, a true Other, by yet another Other. So Liberalism proclaims the killing of the unborn baby as a basic human right. The nonliberal, fresh from seeing the Nazi and the Jew, the Communist and the small farmer, sees the Enlightenment ideologue killing the refutation of his theory. The feminist denounces the death camps before walking into the abortion clinic. Kristeva's vision of the Other inside each one of us is a brilliant theoretical insight. She does not profane it by confronting it with the Other that lives inside every pregnant woman.

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Christopher Norris was awakened to the implications of Critical Theory by the Gulf War, or rather by an article on the crisis written by a leading postmodernist, Jean Baudrillard, in the leftist *Guardian* a few days before the war broke out. (See his *Uncritical Theory: Postmodernism, Intellectuals and the Gulf War*, 1992.) We live inside language, according to the tenets of the faith, and there is no outside, no reality, no facts outside of the language games we play. "We do not have a language," Heidegger wrote. "Rather, language has us." There is a profound insight there, but it is not the whole truth. Baudrillard explained that the crisis that accompanied the Iraqi invasion of

> It is said that one bright young theorist told his friends as he lay dying of AIDS, 'I die happy, because I was infected by Michel Foucault.' Those words could be, may yet be, the epitaph of the humanities in the United States.

Kuwait was a game played by the Powers That Be. There was no There there. When the war was over, along with the massive bombings and killings of soldier and civilian from hostile and friendly fire, the environmental pollution, the massacre of the Kurds who heeded the American call for an uprising against Saddam Hussein which we had no intention of backing, the massive media cheerleading, the putative lessons of Vietnam gone up in smoke, Baudrillard wrote another article (in the communist *Libération* for March 29, 1991), congratulating himself on being correct. We know, says the French intellectual, of the saturation coverage of the war by CNN, so, granted the presence of some or much disinformation, we may doubt the saturation bombing of Iraq. "If we have no practical knowledge of this war—and such knowledge is out of the question—then let us at least have the skeptical intelligence to reject the probability of all information, of all images whatever their source." Of course, he is right to point out that our knowledge of the war came from words and pictures carefully crafted to produce an effect on the uncritical. Do we really therefore know nothing of the war? How did theory end up in this absurd position?

Early in this century, a brilliant Swiss linguist named Ferdinand de Saussure gave lectures that were published after his death. In these lectures, he made a simple but important point, that there is no necessary connection between the sounds of a spoken word, the sign, *le signifiant*, and what the word refers to, the signified, *le signifié*. "Book" in English and "libro" in Italian, for instance, both refer to the same object. The words function in the systems of English and Italian with no special significance attached to what sounds evoke the relevant object. From this simple but true insight, the denial of which was mocked by Plato in his *Cratylus*, the postmodern theorist extrapolated an intellectual nightmare. There is no necessary connection between signifier and signified, spoken word and object. So language is a closed system which has no necessary connection to any putative outside reality. Words do not refer to an extralinguistic reality, and sentences are logical constructs in closed systems, which tell us nothing about the outside world.

The extrapolation from phonetics to semantics, and from linguistics to ontology, is not legitimate. It is refuted by, among other things, the reality of translation. The languages of Europe and the rest of the world are systems, certainly, but they also reflect and uncover a common reality, despite their many differences. We can speak of books and dictatorship and love in many tongues. As those who had sex with Michel Foucault learned to their cost, the fact that English calls it AIDS and French calls it SIDA does not make it any less communicable or deadly. It may be significant, however, that many of those for whom these ideas are important are monoglot theorists in the United States, dependent on translations of authors they cannot read in the original. I know of a university where the debate over the future of the program in Comparative Literature was split between those who felt that to compare literatures one had to be able to read the languages the literatures were written in, and those who insisted loudly that important work in Comp. Lit. was done in English and anything important from abroad got translated. These are the people trapped in the funhouse of language. Is it any wonder that fewer and fewer students are choosing to study with them?

Norris tries to show that Jacques Derrida is aware of all this, and he cites an early article by Derrida on one of the high priests of absolute alterity, Emmanuel Levinas, in which Derrida insisted, against Levinas's influential demand that we respect absolutely the absolute Otherness of the Other, that we can have no understanding or communication with another except as an *alter ego*, different from us, yes, of course, but also like us in at least some important respects. The point is well taken and true. In a later essay, however, Derrida looked more favorably upon Levinas's demands for absolute alterity. It is a symptom of Norris's dilemma. He insists on a few recent paragraphs from Edward Said and Julia Kristeva that contradict or modify their earlier influential stands, and then he must basically ignore a later essay by Derrida, which is very sympathetic to Levinas.

Is there a way out for the humanities, which will preserve contact with language and text and yet will be theoretically sophisticated? We have seen how recent the fall into relativism has been, with most work done since the 1960's and only a few nods to earlier figures, especially Nietzsche and Heidegger. Recently scholars in literary studies, repulsed by the directions the Modern Language Association has taken, have founded a new Association of Literary Scholars and Critics. Like the Back to Basics movement in elementary education, they seem to think that going back to the 50's will suffice to salvage literary studies and the humanities, without acknowledging that the 60's were the child of the 50's. The organization avoided words like "text" and "philology," which were claimed by Paul de Man and his admirers.

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The establishment and explanation of texts, philology in the old sense, is the oldest and most theoretically sophisticated area of literary studies. Its history goes back to the royal librarians of Ptolemaic Alexandria in the third century, B.C. Americans like the late Fredson Bowers and disciples and critics from G. Thomas Tanselle to Hershel Parker have continued to explore the theory of editing and actually to edit texts. Literary theorists write essays and collect those essays into books, but they do not edit texts or write commentaries. Recently Josephine M. Guy and Ian Small, in *Politics and Value in English Studies: A Discipline in Crisis?* (1993), have noticed that the theory and practice of editing may provide for English studies, and the humanities as a whole, a way out of linguistic solipsism and theoretical aporia and a return to that fruitful interaction of theory and practice which is typical of creative periods in all disciplines. As Norris has shown about Baudrillard and other important postmoderns, theory has often been a way for the literary intellectual to talk his way out of matters he does not care to confront. One of the strong cases for textual studies as editing and commenting on texts is that, with all the theoretical disagreements and practical problems, there is no way to avoid real problems. *Chronicles*' Theodore Pappas has shown in excruciating detail how the editors of the Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr., tried to avoid the implications of King's plagiarism, as theorists have avoided the implications of De Man's Nazi past and Foucault's exploitation and virtual murder of his American disciples. There is one important difference. Editing forms part of a millennia-long tradition, and the King editors eventually did their job. They verified and confirmed the massive plagiarism of M.L. King, while their literary critical colleagues were covering up and avoiding the ethical reality that lies behind the history of postmodernism.

It is said that one bright young theorist told his friends as he lay dying of AIDS, "I die happy, because I was infected by Michel Foucault." Those words could be, may yet be, the epitaph of the humanities in the United States. Unlike AIDS there is a cure for postmodernism. It will not come from quoting a few paragraphs of Derrida, or Said, or Kristeva out of the context of their entire careers. It must come from returning to the rich and lively and essential traditions of editing and commenting on the texts that are the basis not only of literary studies, but of our civilization, from antiquity to the present. c

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A Pregnant Teen

by Harold McCurdy

When Mary with Joseph entered Bethlehem
To register for the tax, and drop between
An ox and ass what God had promised them,
The Queen of Heaven was a pregnant teen.

Fierce moralists and politicians now
Decry teen pregnancy as a thing obscene
(And costly to the State), forgetting how
The Queen of Heaven was a pregnant teen.

If history were controlled by governments,
And governments alone, they'd keep it clean,
Decree it was a capital offense
The Queen of Heaven was a pregnant teen.

Nevertheless, despite the paradox,
Before stunned shepherds blundering on the scene
Found very God between the ass and ox,
The Queen of Heaven was a pregnant teen.

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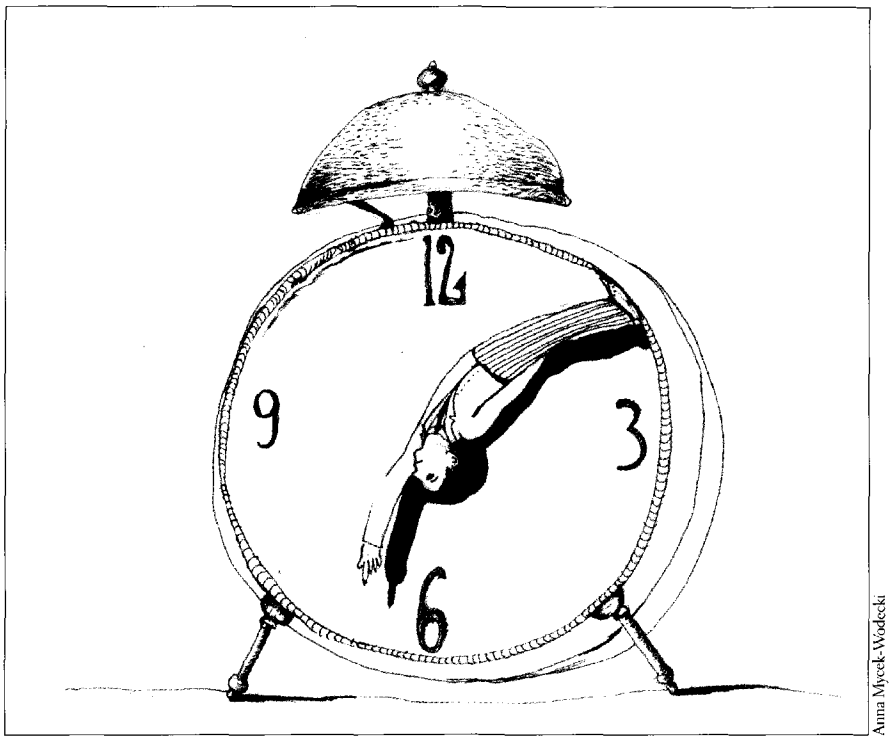
Whig History and Lost Causes

by Jeremy Black



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

It is totally misleading to present history as if its course was inevitable. The past cannot be understood if the elements of chance and contingency are ignored. To assume that what happened was bound to happen—the teleological interpretation of history—takes away the options facing individuals, groups, and governments in the past. It is analytically suspect, and also morally suspect, because it is wrong to argue that the past belongs to the victors. That is a version of the "might is right" approach, the criminals' charter of history, that reduces to impotence and inconsequence those who were, and are, weak or unsuccessful.

Both British and foreign history are littered with developments that were anything but inevitable. I will refer to some of the most important later, but first must note that the purpose of such an exercise is not simply to turn individual episodes on their head but, more generally, to call for a fundamentally different approach to history. The traditional Whiggish stance was one way of tackling what many saw as the purpose of history: explaining how "we came to be here." This commonly assumed that "we" was unproblematic, that the identity and coherence of the English and the French were clear-cut. There was also a clear assumption that the course of history was a matter of progress, that a degree of triumphalism was appropriate: the past as a suitable and heroic reflection of the present. Discussing the past in terms of present values and concerns was a characteristic of this work. British popular historians explained how Britain had come to have a Protestant identity, respect for property, the rule of law, and a self-confidence combining a patriotic sense of national uniqueness with an often xenophobic attitude toward foreigners, especially Catholics.

History of this type presented a clear and obvious past, one that was ordered by the fact that it clearly prepared the way for the present. Thus British history was a seamless web that stretched back to Magna Carta in 1215 and the constitutional struggles of the barons in medieval England, and forward to the 19th-century extension of the franchise. These were seen as arising naturally from the country's development, indeed as being the natural character of the progress of its people, an analysis that reflected the influence of Social Darwinism, ideas of human advancement that stemmed from the influence of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution. But the past is never clear and rarely simple, which is the lesson that emerges most obviously from historical scholarship over the last century. There have been and always will be competing schools of thought, but they share a sense that the past is controversial, that the debates of the past over policies and events can be repeated in modern controversies over their analysis.

All too frequently, this level of controversy is neglected in general works and textbooks. This is understandable because writing such books involves a difficult process of selection, and the dictates of space encourage a schematic interpretation. Major events, or rather events that appear full of importance

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and consequence in hindsight, necessarily provide a chronological structure of such a summary, dictate the emphases, and thus appear to occur as a result of preceding such events. A shortage of space produces an emphasis on order and policy, causes and results, as opposed to disorder and confusion. In the domestic context decision-making is simplified, and pressures are said directly to cause policies: for example, popular agitation for an extension of the franchise "led" to the British First Reform Act of 1832. The ambiguity of influence is replaced by the need to attribute cause briefly. This can also be seen in the style of writing: there is a staccato of active assertion in place of the more realistic balancing of subordinate clauses and the passive tense.

In addition, there is a process of aggregation, or simplification, that eases the difficulties of lengthy explanation. Groups are presented clearly, for example the peasantry, the aristocracy, and the middle class, and each is seen as united and operating in a clear fashion. Similarly, bodies such as the government or Parliament, interests such as "mercantile influence" and "public opinion," periods, such as the 1590's, developments, such as "policy," and situations, such as culture or socioeconomic structure, are presented as clear and distinct activities, influences, eras, and bodies whose conscious interaction determined events. This culminates in the understandable, but inaccurate, use of countries and peoples as shorthand terms for complex and often confusing processes of decision-making.

The relationship between institution or group and opinion is another vexed problem. Furthermore, there is a strong tendency to consolidate and reify ideas and attitudes, and terms such as *reaction*, *conservative*, *liberal*, *progressive*, and *radical* are applied far too readily. Instead, the nature and influence of such ideas altered considerably and often involved controversy. They require continual reassessment in any wide-ranging study, but space rarely permits this. In addition, it is necessary to be cautious in suggesting that policies arose or events happened because of ideas. It is important to explain the process by which these ideas were influential.

The past was far more complex than is generally presented, and good "A" Level students should reveal how difficult it is to be precise about past developments. They should be encouraged to reflect maturely not only on the degree to which there have been, and are, historiographical controversies, but also about the very problems of understanding the past and writing history. It is important to appreciate that choices existed, that developments and policies were not inevitable and structurally determined, but, instead, that contingencies and the views of individuals were of consequence. In recreating the world of choice in uncertainty that affected decisions, scholar, teacher, and student alike are restoring the element of free will, a moral dimension to history that invites us in considering how people in the past chose, to reflect on what we might have done, and do, in similar circumstances.

Students now use sources from the past far more than previously. They capture the flavor of contemporary opinion and indicate the way in which people thought and expressed themselves. Documents present problems: they were intended to persuade and can mislead. However, sources enable one to grasp the uncertainties of the past, the roles of chance and perception in societies that did not know what was going to happen. Sources restore a human perspective to a historical imagination too often dominated by impersonal forces. This can lead to greater difficulties in posing and answering questions of the relationships between change and continuity, the short term and the *longue durée*, but what history teaches is humane skepticism: the difficulties of comprehension and the problems with clear-cut, schematic interpretations. As a subject, history is, therefore, opposed to the clarity of ideology. It is not an unbroken mirror reflecting our views, but a fractured glass with pieces missing or opaque, and a general pattern that is impossible to distinguish to general satisfaction.

Military history is the most obvious field in which it is dangerous to adopt the perspective of hindsight. War-gamers pursue an entirely reasonable pastime, asking whether battles, campaigns, and conflicts could have had different results. Could the Jacobites have won, the British have defeated the American Revolutionaries, or the Confederates triumphed in the American Civil War? Recent work has thrown doubt on any determinist technological approach to the history of warfare, and the role of chance and contingent factors of terrain, leadership quality, morale, the availability of reserves, and the unpredictable spark that ignites a powder magazine appear crucial when explaining particular engagements. War is not always won by the big battalions, and the determinist economic account that explains success in international relations in terms of the economic strength of particular states, the approach adopted in Paul Kennedy's *Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* (1989), is open to question.

There is also a lack of inevitability in internal affairs. Thus, the constitutional, political, and religious trajectories of individual states and nations were far from necessary. It was not inevitable that Britain would become Protestant, while Ireland and France remained Catholic. It was not inevitable that the Stuarts would be less successful than the other newly powerful dynasties of the early 17th century, the Romanovs in Russia and the Bourbons in France. It was not inevitable that the Westminster Parliament would survive and grow in power and authority when other constitutional bodies were suppressed or became less influential.

The entire agenda of early modern history can be reexamined. The decline of Spain was no more inevitable than the French Revolution. The latter conclusion arises from recent research, but it was also a view held by contemporaries. The revolution in its early or "pre-revolutionary" stages was seen not as a new development, a product of spreading radicalism, but rather as a conventional political crisis, in which a ruler faced serious domestic problems, primarily aristocratic factionalism and financial difficulties. These appeared to affect France's international capability, her ability to wage war or sustain a military confrontation, her stability as an ally, but they were not novel in type, did not therefore necessarily appear insuperable or likely to provoke a change in the French political system, and it was possible to envisage a revival of French strength. This was to come, eventually, through revolutionary change, but in 1788 and early 1789 it appeared, instead, that a revival, producing a more effective monarchy, would come either through a solution to the political crisis achieved by traditional means or by institutional reform and constitutional revival that focused on a new partnership between crown and nation, a path predicted by the radical Tom Paine in his pamphlet *Prospects on the Rubicon*, published in November 1787. This was certainly what was sought by the French government and political nation. William Robertson welcomed the prospect of France adopting British constitutional principles, and thus becoming stronger.

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The French Ambassador in London discerned a fear that the Estates General would lead to a revival of French strength as a result of royal power being more solidly based. In January 1789, the Count of Aranda, formerly the Spanish Ambassador in Paris, suggested that the Third Estate would support the crown, in order not to be crushed by the other two estates. He felt sure that the wealth and numbers of this estate would be of great consequence; in short, that the crown could create a powerful new constituency of support.

This was not mere wishful thinking. Contemporaries did not have the advantage of reading future scripts that posited the inevitability, indeed necessity, of the revolution and the impossibility of reform in *ancien régime* societies. Instead, they were aware of the complexity of their circumstances, a complexity that itself affected contemporary attitudes, and of contradictory developments. For example, Gustavus III had considerable success in Sweden in seeking the support of the Third Estate against aristocratic opponents. There was nothing inevitable in Louis XVI's failure in France.

The royalists lost in France, or did they? Republican radicalism did not survive the 1790's and the rise of Napoleon, while the Bourbons returned in 1814 and, more successfully, 1815. Similarly, the Habsburg state in Spain is generally presented as in crisis and decline in the early 17th century. There is a massive and famous study by J.H. Elliott on the revolt of the Catalans in 1640, but no comparable work on the reconquest of Catalonia. Spain still ruled the largest empire in the world in 1700, and was subsequently to enjoy a revival in strength under Philip V and Charles III. Yet that is generally forgotten or treated as inconsequential in accounts focused on the decline of Spain. "Lost causes" are often the product of historiographical orthodoxies that can be challenged.

Yet there are also genuinely "lost" causes. These are specific, such as a greater Armenia including much of modern Turkey, or the world of the Central and Eastern European Jews, and, more general, the world of crown, church, and aristocracy that dominated so much of Europe until 1917. Even if details of such a world can be preserved or restored, the attitudes of clear superiority and, especially prior to the late 18th century, little serious criticism, are gone. Such a shift can be treated as a failure reflecting inherent weakness and redundancy, but that is not a very helpful approach. For example, Spain is generally held to have been in "decline" after 1600, but of course she remained a mighty empire for another two centuries. By the standards of the modern world, that is a considerable achievement.

Aside from the issue of longevity, it is also the case that the world of the past was the world of what have been judged successes and failures in hindsight, and often *only* in hindsight. To neglect the latter is to present an incomplete account that makes no sense of what have been judged successful. It is a major challenge for writers and teachers to know how best to incorporate both dimensions. Yet each—their relationships, difficulties of assessing success and failure, *and* the problems and dangers in assuming that such differences were necessary and inevitable—is critical to recovering the past and understanding the present.

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Prozac

by Harold McCurdy

The common people thumb their Bibles,
Study repentance, seek in prayer
Strength to endure the endless troubles
To which our mortal flesh is heir.

The élite, well-heeled, sophisticated,
Repair to specialists who care
For tangled DNA with Prozac,
Le dernier cri against despair.

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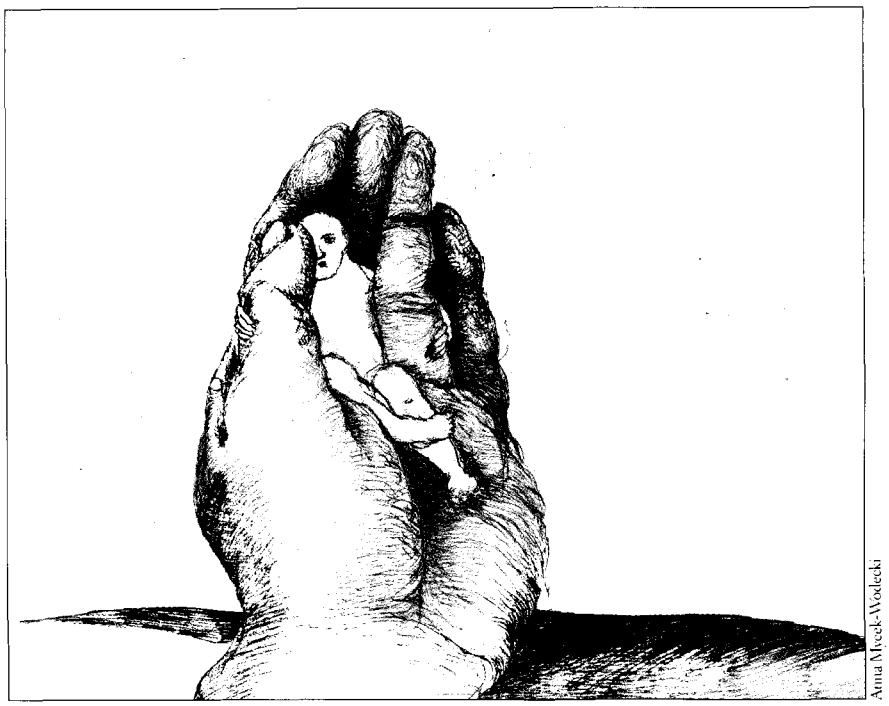
Thomas Szasz Against the Theorists

by Irving Louis Horowitz



Since the publication of The Myth of Mental Illness *and* Psychiatric Justice *some 35 years ago, Thomas Szasz has battled the popular conception of mental illness as a disease "like any other." He has long argued against the involuntary interning of the mentally ill, against denying the mentally ill their constitutional right to trial, and against exonerating criminals from responsibility for their actions on the basis of "temporary insanity." Thomas Szasz is a professor of psychiatry at the State University of New York in Syracuse.*

There is a strange and wondrous story by Edgar Allan Poe called "The System of Doctor Tarr and Professor Fether," in which the reader is never quite certain, at least until the end, just who is the superintendent and who is the patient in a *Maison de Santé* outside of Paris in the first half of the 19th century. Indeed, there is sufficient role reversal taking place so that the reader is unrelieved of doubt on the doctor-patient role even after the story is concluded. In the short story, Poe mixes terror and kindness, sickness is commingled with health, lucidity with imaginings of all sorts. Overall, we are left with grave doubt as to the relationships of people to each other—especially in confined settings, or what Erving Goffman preferred to call total institutions. The human condition is neither comedic nor tragic, but some ever-changing admixture of the two.

It is not that categories of sanity and insanity are fictitious, but that the human bearers of such categories are all too real. They operate from a mixed bag of motives which require explication. Poe's story might well be the appropriate fictive tale to the quite real concerns of Thomas Szasz. For his interests range far beyond commonplace slogans about mental illness, into the painful ambiguities of everyday life—and the need to make decisions about what constitutes creative as well as destructive behavior, no less than what we mean by health and ailment. His work crisscrosses law, medicine, and the social sciences with frightening ease—frightening because Szasz is so knowledgeable, and even more, because he probes the sources of our intellectual boundaries in a challenging way.

If there is another living psychiatrist who has suffered more professional obliquity while sustaining great public recognition, this person escapes my recognition. To be sure, the work of Thomas Szasz has far greater support in allied disciplines such as sociology and political science than in his own native field. This is a two-way street, of course. For if people like Erving Goffman drew support in his *Asylums* from the earlier efforts of Szasz, so too has Szasz sought relief and comfort in the likes of George Herbert Mead and his *Mind, Self & Society*. To say the least, the life and career of Szasz are a tribute to the incredible moral spine of this individual, but also to the tangled web of professional relationships that have evolved over the century in the social and behavioral sciences.

Calling attention to the contributions of the social sciences may be the greatest sin committed by Szasz in the eyes of his critics. For it is the medical model of psychiatric practice that comes under the sharpest critique in his work. This is not because Szasz is against medicine—indeed his training and points of reference have always been the medical profession—

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but against the smuggling of categories of crime and punishment, for example, into the definition of mental illness. In a recent essay, Szasz adroitly sums up the dual edge to his critique of contemporary psychiatry: "The focus of my conceptual critique is the distinction between the literal and metaphorical use of language; and the focus of my moral-political critique is the distinction between dealing with grown persons as adults, possessing free will and rights and responsibilities, as against dealing with them as if they were infants or idiots lacking free will and rights and responsibilities."

> If there is another living psychiatrist who has suffered more professional obliquity while sustaining great public recognition, this person escapes my recognition.

One might claim that even the conceptual critique is saturated with political judgment—since the literal and metaphorical use of language has, over time, been well understood to have a high political content. For what else has given George Orwell his permanent niche in the world of letters if not this deep appreciation of language as a symbolic tool of manipulation, no less than a prosaic tool in communication? It is the language of medicine—the certitude with which the idea of mental patients having mental diseases and medical claimants having scientific rigor that is a basic source of the politics of mental health—that is, the presumption that a subset of professionals can impose its will and judgments over a large set of medical practitioners.

The stakes in this intellectual struggle are so high—ranging from fees to be collected to worldviews to be protected—that it is little wonder that Szasz has been pilloried in a manner and with a drumbeat that surely would have sent a less determined individual to Coventry and back. Hardly a book or article he writes fails to produce a legion of critics. The lines of criticism seem to divide the political and the professional.

In the former category, we are told that Szasz does not represent a consensus of opinion and is therefore wrong, or he so distorts psychiatry that the normative foundations of society would be undermined by his judgments. On the professional level, the usual criticism is that he is mistaken on specific points of psychiatric practice, to the more recent and quite fashionable critique that psychopharmacology has given precisely the sort of chemical basis to neurosis and psychoses that Szasz's work largely if not categorically denies. Since Szasz himself has responded at great length to these other charges, I shall eschew a defense of his work as such, and move on to the political and economic sources of those assaults. But before doing so, it might be worthwhile to explain what elements in his work have enraged his professional colleagues. At least in this way, the ethical battleground of psychiatric practice can perhaps be sharply etched.

Ultimately, Szasz's achievement is his unique ability to bring into a discipline, which, ostensibly at least, has come to pride itself on its indifference to moral claims, precisely a sense of morality—an ethic of responsibility. In a universe in which everyone claims victim status, a liberal virus threatens to undermine a liberal society. When everyone from the street pusher to the university president can claim victim status, it is precisely this sense of ethical responsibility that vanishes behind a cloud of psychiatric smoke. Such vague notions as ethics are given meaning by Szasz, to wit, sufficient education to make distinctions as to what is right and wrong, good and evil, no less than true and false.

And while Szasz has been, improperly in my view, classified as anti-Freudian, he is perhaps the most Freudian of the present lot of analysts—for to rekindle the phrase of Philip Rieff, Szasz shares with Freud the "mind of the moralist" in defining the field and developing scenarios for the determination of neurosis and normalcy in the conduct of everyday affairs. For without a moral sensibility, prospects for the reconstruction of society become null and void. Egoism comes to replace civilization, and the discontents are able only to undermine, rather than restore, that sense of purpose that gives reason its place in the human mind.

This is not to deny that Szasz has been critical of many propositions within the Freudian corpus—from the Oedipal complex and notions of philogenetic memory traces to Freud's judgments about the analytic setting of doctor-patient relations; this hardly makes Szasz unique. Indeed, there are many practitioners of psychiatry who are far more severe in their judgments of Freud, who nonetheless earn Szasz's wrath. It is the singular merit of Szasz that his concerns extend far beyond the parochial boundaries of biography or, for that matter, the dangers of digressing from an established corpus of the master's writings. Rather, in a sense of the goals of medicine: the prolongation of life, and even the goals of analysis, the ability of the person to make free and rational choices however such big words are defined, I find the two far closer in spirit, than those who believe that in attacking Szasz they are somehow protecting Freud.

For in reviewing the constancy over 35 years of his major themes, one senses the "ought" behind the "is"—the impulse to liberty as free choice even more than the lack of efficacy of psychiatric treatment and counseling. Indeed, in his most recent book, *Cruel Compassion*, which can be viewed as a final manifesto on his lifelong themes, there is a sharper polarity: caring for others by means of coercion, or doing so with their consent. The libertarian motif became text rather than subtext. To those who claim that a theory of consent is not feasible with those labeled as mentally ill, he reminds his critics that it is they who continually utilize and invoke the medial analogies. And if this analogy between the physical and the psychic is accurate, then, too, must the right of the patient to solicit treatment be viewed as inviolable by extension.

Perhaps certain levels of coercion are required. But Szasz's answers—not always fully worked out—are two in number: if this be the case, then the analog to medicine in general must be abandoned or seriously revised. But more important, to argue the case for coercive practice is to move dangerously close to the identification of the scientific community with the po-

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lice force. And here Szasz, in his full passion, returns to the ethical basis of all issues connected with health. It is worth quoting a passage from his *Cruel Compassion*, because it is both an apt summary of his ethical position and, no less, a warning to those with a monopoly of power—including the power to treat patients.

> It is dishonest to pretend that caring coercively for the mentally ill invariably helps him, and that abstaining from such coercion is tantamount to 'withholding treatment' from him. Every social policy entails benefits as well as harms. Although our ideas about benefits and harms vary from time to time, all history teaches us to beware of benefactors who deprive their beneficiaries of liberty.

Of course, it might be argued that this is a straw man, that many individuals do indeed seek the very sort of treatment which Szasz finds reprehensible. But that is another matter—having to do with the empirical efficacy of specific techniques of treatment. One might say that there is an ethical break between psychiatric control of society's unwanted, and psychiatric treatment of society's elite. One might say that "the myth of mental illness" may be common to all segments of society, while the reality of psychiatry as a mode of coercion is unique only to special segments of an advanced society. I am not sure that Szasz has worked out the parameters of this relationship of voluntary and involuntary patients, and libertarian and authoritarian psychiatrists. Perhaps this is a work yet to come.

My own view is that the gap between psychology and psychiatry in general, and to psychoanalyses in particular, will both widen and deepen. The uses of psychology—from testing and measuring individual performance to defining the structure of perception and conception—have expanded over time. And while this expansion may not always be uniform, or for that matter, even welcome, it is real enough. One might well argue that far too much reliance on psychologists has crept into everything from evaluating career capabilities to defining students as having learning disabilities. Nonetheless, this aspect of professional psychology has expanded enormously—the size and outreach of professions and journals attest to this.

At the level of psychoanalysis, the situation is far different. It is a sub-branch of psychiatry, and one that has great strength only in isolated pockets—usually suburban areas where time and wealth conspire to permit its practice. The need to compress years into days has had a variety of consequences: much higher use of drug therapies on one hand and a reinterpretation of behavior to widen the area of the permissible and reduce that which is considered bizarre. And here it is not the moral assault by libertarian critics like Szasz that has proven effective, so much as the economic assault of the marketplace and the social assault of contemporary relativism.

So Szasz can be said to have scored some substantial victories in his crusade for a libertarian option, but also a few major setbacks. He himself realizes as much, since the rise of Medicare and Medicaid programs, inclusive of psychiatry, has expanded the payment basis for mental illness of all sorts; and this is coupled with the license given to psychiatrists to define huge numbers of society's unwanted as mentally ill rather than physically dangerous. There are, in short, dynamics at work within the society that tend to subvert the very goals Szasz seeks. But there are also tendencies that reinforce his position. Just how these social considerations affect the theory and practice of psychiatry is beginning to occupy many talented people—including Szasz himself—for whom the larger context of the field has transformed the world of professional analysis into one of public discourse.

But quite beyond minoritarian fashions such as libertarianism lurks the mind of the moralist. And it is this which provides the umbilical cord between Szasz and Freud—one that cannot be severed, no matter how severe Szasz's reservations might be about the therapeutic process itself, or the conduct of its practitioners. I am reminded of the fact that Philip Rieff, some 30 years ago, wrote a book on *Freud: The Mind of the Moralist*. It is in the dramaturgy of good and evil that Rieff saw the staying power of Freudianism as an ideology. While Szasz's savage critique of "the manufacture of madness" by psychiatrists and witch hunters prevents him from exercising the power of an "ism" (nor I hasten to add would he desire such an appellation), the burden of his work is precisely to reannounce the dramaturgical aspects of psychiatry: the confrontation of oppressor and oppressed, of good and evil, of science versus mystification.

I would argue that this aspect of Szasz's work—his morally centered critique of a branch of *both* medical science and social science—has led to certain shifts in his objects of wrath over time. But these have been minor in contrast to the shifts in those who support and oppose him. I know of few figures in modern intellectual history who can enlist the wrath and support of a conventional "left" and "right." And thus it is that an Edgar Z. Friedenberg, a grand guru of the 1960's and the anti-American generation, can praise "the depth of Szasz's commitment to human freedom and the precision with which he perceives that psychiatry has created highly effective forms of human bondage" while an equally powerful voice in the conservative movement, Ernest van den Haag, can claim to have been "entranced by the originality of Szasz's ideas and the brilliance and cogency of the presentation."

But what links scholars like Friedenberg on the left and van den Haag on the right—if one can still use such tattered terms in a meaningful way—is their marginality. And that must ultimately be said of Szasz as well. For what we have with Szasz is an attack on the center of a profession, on its established habits of advancement and promotion no less than patterns of professionalization. While I have concentrated on the relatively well known aspects of Szasz's critiques of the latter, it is his implicit assault on the former—on ways in which a profession awards and rewards—that so excites his opponents. This is not a pleasant academic discourse, but a bitter struggle over the fate of a science on one side and its economic foundations on the other.

For Szasz makes a direct appeal to a larger, intelligent public—the sort of individuals who might see a psychiatrist for better or for worse—to reconsider their basic notions of superordination and subordination. And to do so is a direct querying of trust. To pay money to an analyst, to allow the analyst to sit in judgment, whether through expert testimony in legal matters or direct decisions about incarceration in medical matters, are weighty concerns. I suspect that at the outset of his career, when he first started raising fundamental questions about the scientific status of psychiatry, Szasz thought little, if at all, about the politics and economics of such considerations. But as his analytic skills sharpened, and the target of his criticisms became increasingly focused, so too did the resistance of the

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psychiatric mainstream. This in turn fueled Szasz's sense of the political. He became involved in the politics of libertarianism. For his work moved from a critique of a profession to a defense of the person, or as Szasz liked to put it, "to a struggle for self-esteem." His approving citation of C.S. Lewis serves Szasz as a final judgment, not on the scientific pretenses of a profession, but on its moral claims: "Of all the tyrannies a tyranny sincerely exercised for the good of its victims may be the most oppressive. To be 'cured' against one's will and cured of states which we may not regard as disease is to be put on a level with those who never will; to be classed with infants, imbeciles, and domestic animals." But in claiming that "these words still apply to psychiatry today," he only increased the level of his marginality. He became vulnerable to assaults in ways he could hardly have imagined in the late 1950's, when *The Myth of Mental Illness* first appeared.

This is not aimed to provide a brief history of Szasz; not at all. It is rather to make clear the politics of psychiatry and the ethics of a psychiatrist. What emerges is hardly a pretty picture of professional and academic life in America. The best that can be said is that such a life is never dull; the worst that can be said is that those in charge of a profession are not by any means best fit to be the guardians of scientific considerations. The long and short of it is that Szasz has garnered the *public* rewards of his marginality, while at the same time paying a heavy price in terms of the *professional* emoluments.

Nonetheless, it might be said, more in sorrow than criticism, that the psychiatry and psychoanalysis of the mid-1990's is radically different from that of the 1950's. When Szasz started writing on fundamental themes, American culture, no less than medical practice, still accepted electroshock therapy as a norm, and took for granted the blessings of incarceration—forces and otherwise—upon those labeled mentally ill. While the humanization of treatment has not been entirely even or steady, it is sufficiently noteworthy to raise questions about the tactics of critical analysis. One would like to see Szasz take some credit for such new developments rather than flog a dead, or at least badly injured, pseudoscientific horse.

Given this combination of intellectual circumstances, it is little wonder that Szasz, in the twilight of his life, can boast fewer acolytes than far lesser figures. In part, this is a consequence of the double edge of Szasz's work: it devastates totalitarianism, in its fascist and communist varieties, with equal force, and it cuts down ideological humbug, however meliorate or humane its social intentions or scientific pretensions. Thus it is that Szasz must deal with the loneliness, the isolation, that comes from moralism as a personal posture no less than as an element in his analysis of a discipline. The "struggle for self esteem" which Szasz offers is a lonely struggle—and again, one that has a curious analog in Freud's notions of self-liberation through rather than against the therapeutic process. Thus it is that Szasz cannot quite free himself from his adversaries within psychiatry—in part because of a magnificent obsession with the subject, but in great measure because he shares with a century of psychiatry, despite its own ambiguities and doubts, the search for human liberation—however fumbling that search may be at different times and different places.

In what might well be called the anomaly of success, Szasz now takes his place in the pantheon of the very psychiatric movement that he has so chastised and devalued over the years. But that is because the secret is out, due in part to Szasz's own efforts: the function and structure of psychiatry, especially psychoanalyses, belongs more to the search for ethical moorings in a secular world than empirical science as such. The sooner the practice of psychoanalysis realizes this, the earlier we can all get on with the shared task of fashioning a new, and more modest, science of human nature. Curiously, Szasz put this search in quite elegant perspective in the preface to his first, and perhaps most enduring book, *The Myth of Mental Illness*: "I believe that psychiatry could be a science. I also believe that psychotherapy is an effective method of helping people—not to recover from an 'illness,' it is true, but rather to learn about themselves, others, and life." c

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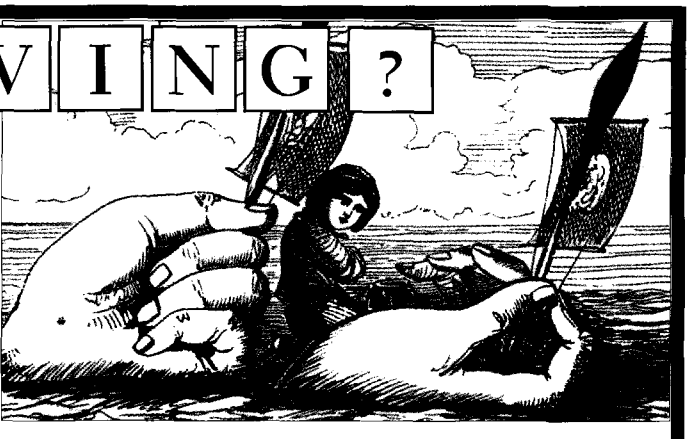

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Glad To Be of Use

by Samuel Francis

"Satiate with power, of fame and wealth possessed,
A nation grows too glorious to be blest;
Conspicuous made, she stands the mark of all,
And foes join foes to triumph in her fall."
—George Crabbe, *Thelibrau*

The Next American Nation: The New Nationalism and the Fourth American Revolution
by Michael Lind
New York: The Free Press;
436 pp., $23.00

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In the last year, Michael Lind has emerged as the new *wunderkind* of American political discussion. He was the subject of a full profile in the *Washington Post*'s Style section last summer, and *Newsweek*'s July 31 cover story on the "overclass" was drawn on a concept central to the book under review here. The most noticeable of his many articles in the last year or so was probably his analysis in the *New York Review of Books* of the writings of Pat Robertson, in which he not only argued that Robertson and his Christian Coalition were indeed anti-Semites, as the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith has claimed, but renounced his own earlier allegiance to the political right for failing to follow his lead in repudiating Robertson's supposed hidden anti-Semitic and homophobic agenda. The self-abasing apologetic that the Coalition's Ralph Reed gave before the League shortly afterward may have been precipitated by this article. Lind's analysis of Robertson was immensely useful to the Anti-Defamation League's attack on the Christian Coalition, and his article appeared just in time to prevent the ADL's own ammunition from blowing up in its face.

But it is *The Next American Nation* that is so far the capstone of Lind's reputation. Contrary to the neoconservative champions of what he calls "democratic universalism" and American "exceptionalism," and consistent with arguments made in *Chronicles* over the last decade, Lind argues for the existence of a real American nation, defined mainly by a common culture and language, rather than by race or adherence to a creed of universal rights. His case for a common nationality also involves a critique of contemporary multiculturalism, which rejects a common nationality as a mask for Eurocentric racial and cultural hegemony.

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

Nevertheless, while recognizing the fact of a common nationality throughout American history, Lind's American past is a succession of three regimes or "republics" that express the interests and values of the different population strains and classes that created them. The "First Republic," which he calls "Anglo-America," persisted from the adoption of the Constitution to the Civil War and reflected the power of its largely Anglo-Saxon or "Anglo-Germanic" people. The "Second Republic," or "Euro-America," flourished from the Civil War to the civil rights era of the 1960's and represented the dominance of a non-Anglo-Germanic, but still European, population. The "Third Republic," or "Multicultural America," is the regime in which we now find ourselves, as mass non-European immigration and the emergence of nonwhite racial, cultural, and political consciousness force changes in the distribution of power and wealth, as well as in national cultural symbolism.

Each of these eras or republics is distinguished by a particular ruling class—the first by its largely British-descended agrarian and mercantile elites that saw themselves as the heirs to ancient Anglo-Saxon and Germanic traditions of republican liberty; the second by its industrial capitalist elite that depended on mass labor and, therefore, mass European immigration; and the third by what Lind calls, in a *term d'art* he has already popularized, "the overclass." Each republic was also characterized by "its own consensus, its own threefold national

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formula, describing the national community, the civic religion, and the political creed," each of which also reflected the interests of the rulers of the regimes. "Federal republicanism," essentially aristocratic and decentralist and drawn from British Old Whig political doctrine, was the defining political creed of the First Republic; "federal democracy," based on a larger and more centralized national state and more directly democratic, was the political ideal of the Second Republic; and a multiculturalist democracy revolving around the "group rights" enshrined in affirmative action, multiculturalist curricula, and racially gerrymandered electoral districts characterizes the Third Republic.

Lind's morphology of American history (a caricature of Clyde Wilson's richer analysis) is just a bit too cute, and it can be criticized for its casual lumping (or separation) of diverse figures, ideas, and forces.

Although he insists throughout on common language and common culture rather than race as the basis of nationality, it is really racial and ethnic consciousness that distinguish Lind's three "republics." The first two republics in his historical scheme were both explicitly racialist in their public ideologies. The First Republic, as Lind describes it, was virtually proto-Nazi, with Thomas Jefferson wrapping himself in the myth of the Anglo-Saxon race and the discovery of the unity of the Indo-European (or "Aryan") languages in the late 18th century providing a rationale for the doctrine of Anglo-Germanic supremacy. The Second Republic was no less racialist, though it modified the doctrine of Anglo-Saxon supremacy to one of merely white supremacy, restricting the immigration of nonwhites but allowing the entry of Europeans and their assimilation into the national economy and mythology. The Third Republic also revolves around race, perhaps even more explicitly than the first two, except that white supremacy is rejected and scorned, while the "empowerment" of nonwhites is exalted.

Lind seems unaware of the racialist implications of his analysis. He is explicit about his belief that race is an objectively meaningless concept that should disappear through intermarriage. Yet despite his denials, race keeps slipping in through the basement window as a major historical force. When he comes to describing the common language and common culture that define the American nation, they too turn out to be racially based. The common language is plainly derived from Indo-European languages, while the common culture is derived from the cultures of European populations. Leaving aside the question of the extent to which race actually determines culture, what Lind's own account implies is that race is the carrier of culture, if only because we tend to learn our culture from the same people, our parents and their breeding pools.

Despite its flaws, Lind's concept of culture is considerably deeper than that of neoconservative universalists like Ben Wattenberg, who view American culture as limited to the techno-pop of Madonna and McDonald's, getting rich quick, and invocations of civics textbook celebrations of democracy and equality for everybody. By their cultural standards, assimilation takes place as soon as an immigrant gets a job and starts watching television. Assimilation to Lind's standards would be more difficult, but he still underestimates the persistent power of alien habits of thought and conduct, and he never seems to grasp that culture consists not merely in unique customs but in distinctive norms that define the ways in which a people is supposed to think, feel, and act.

Lind's concept of class is as flawed as his view of culture, and it is his account of the "overclass" that, more than any other aspect of his book, has grabbed the popular imagination. He did not coin the term (Kevin Phillips, for one, uses it in one of his books earlier in this decade), but it is a useful word to describe a social stratum that lacks any other label and is now beginning to acquire its own consciousness and identity.

Lind defines a social class as a "group of families, united by intermarriage and a common subculture, whose members tend to predominate in certain professions and political offices, generation after generation." But this definition conflates a social class (the kinship and subcultural elements) with a ruling class (the domination element); not all social classes "predominate in certain professions and political offices," only elites or ruling classes (which are not the same thing either). Moreover, defining social class in terms of kinship and subcultures is not adequate. The members of any class tend to marry among each other, and the custom of intermarriage is not distinctive of classes (members of the same nations, races, and religions also tend to intermarry). If the concept of class is to be useful for social and political analysis, it has to identify a set of common interests, economic, political, or social, that unite one group in distinction from others with different and often conflicting interests.

But Lind's discussion of the overclass has little to do with his own definition of class. Despite a clever dissection of the sexual and marital habits of the overclass, which include postponed marriage and postadolescent cohabitation as a form of trial marriage, the overclass is not at all defined by intermarriage. The overclass, he writes, is "a small group consisting of affluent white executives, professionals, and rentiers, most of them with advanced degrees, who with their dependents amount to no more than a fifth or so of the American population." Fair enough, but this definition excludes the kinship and subcultural elements of his definition of social class.

Lind's overclass is essentially a variation of his fellow Texan C. Wright Mills' Power Elite, though it also owes a good deal to James Burnham and the theory of the managerial revolution, from which Mills also borrowed. The overclass, Lind writes, "originated in the middle of the 20th century in the merger of the Northeastern elite [the industrial capitalists of the Second Republic] with other Anglo-American sectional elites and the assimilated, upwardly mobile descendants of 19th- and 20th-century European immigrants." Its power is based on fraud and manipulation: "The hypocrisy and cunning of its members should not be mistaken for weakness. Machiavelli observed that one must rule either by *sforza* or *frodo*, by force or fraud. The white overclass in the United States since the 60's has specialized in ruling by fraud." The great fraud it perpetrates, he argues, is in claiming that it is liberal, supposedly committed to promoting social change and encouraging equality, while in reality its concessions to nonwhites are minimal. Its sponsorship of "group rights," multiculturalism, and "identity politics" are in fact "merely America's version of the oldest oligarchic trick in the book: divide and rule."

The overclass, Lind argues, by pretending to support nonwhite racial aspirations, actually promotes racial polarization and keeps the races apart to prevent the emergence of a transracial

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political coalition that would directly threaten its dominance. One of his basic misconceptions about the overclass is that it depends on inheritance far more than it really does. Earlier elites, he rightly points out, have depended on inheritance and have become true oligarchies as a result. He tries (but fails) to show that the overclass does the same thing. Unlike earlier elites such as the English gentry, Boston brahmins, or local and regional elites in 19th-century America, the overclass does not depend on intermarriage or inheritance, despite its members' cohabitation and eventual intermarriage and their efforts to set their offspring up in advantageous positions. Indeed, the overclass doesn't even rely on the family, which is why it tends to scorn family and kinship bonds of all kinds.

The overclass, Lind never quite seems to grasp, depends on its proficiency in managerial and technical skills (hence the importance of "advanced degrees" in his characterization of it) and their applications to organized political, economic, and cultural affairs. Its power derives from the dependence of the modern economy, culture, government, and politics on such skills. Proficiency in these skills cannot be acquired or transmitted through kinship but only by "merit," which presupposes not only intellectual abilities but also various personality traits that enable the "meritorious" to work and play well with others in immense bureaucratized organizations where following established routines and adhering to established organizational norms of thought and behavior are the minimal requirements for survival and advancement.

It is precisely because the overclass depends on merit in this sense that it objects to the other structures of reward that older elites favored. The overclass rejects (and undermines) not only family connections and inherited wealth and status but also traditional religion, morals and manners, local governmental authority and regional loyalties, and racial identity. Such institutions do not recognize managerial proficiency and personalities as the only valuable characteristics of an elite, and they permit the competition of alternative elites that could rival the overclass. The vehicle for that subversion is generally known as liberalism, the political formula of the managerial overclass today. Its liberalism and its support of nonwhite and anti-white forces and agendas is not just a mask; it is an authentic expression of its group interests, an instrument by which it acquires and keeps power, while at the same time managing the destruction of the culture and nationality whence it arose.

Lind contrives to miss the structural interests of the overclass that liberalism serves, yet he does grasp what the overclass is doing and the costs it is imposing on American society. "The overclass-dominated political elite of both parties has waged a generation-long class war against the middle class. That class war has been waged on three fronts: regressive taxation, free-market globalism, and the new feudalism," meaning the trend toward privatization, for the benefit of the overclass, of what should be public services—police protection through private security guards, private schools, private parks and roads, a "volunteer" military, the withdrawal to the suburbs and exurbs. The result of this war on the middle class is not only the social and economic polarization of classes and races, but what Lind calls the trend toward "Brazilianization," with the real prospect of a technobureaucracy insulated from the costs of its own dominance and ruling and a middle-class society reduced to an ugly, violent, vulgar, and increasingly impoverished wasteland.

Lind's account of the overclass war on the middle class would be considerably stronger if he showed any grasp of the "culture war," which is key to overclass domination. Middle-class and traditional culture are impediments to overclass interests. Broadly speaking, it is in the long-term interest of the overclass (not of anyone else) to "managerialize" society so that all aspects of life are organized, packaged, routinized, and subjugated to manipulation by the technical skills the overclass possesses, and that interest requires the undermining of institutions and norms that are independent of, and impediments to, overclass control. Lind says nothing about the culture war, perhaps because he shares the overclass's hostility to the deeper American culture as racist, homophobic, and wrapped up in religious fanaticism.

Indeed, for all its fulminations and occasional useful insights into the overclass, and all its purported determination to expose and challenge overclass domination, Lind's book serves overclass interests. This becomes clear, not only through his fallacious insistence on the "white" and "conservative" identity of the overclass, but also through his own description of the agenda of "liberal nationalism."

Lind does indeed reject some of the most important policies of multiculturalism, including mass immigration and affirmative action, but what he wants is the installation of the "Fourth Republic," or "Trans-America," in which racial and economic inequality will be abolished. "Nothing less than a radical reconstruction of the American class hierarchy is required to reduce the diminished but still significant correlation between class and color that is the enduring legacy of three centuries of caste law and caste politics."

That radical reconstruction is to be carried out by the national state, the prophets of which for Lind were Alexander Hamilton and his heirs, Webster, Clay, Lincoln, the two Roosevelts, and Lyndon Johnson, with Herbert Croly thrown in as a transitional prophet of what he calls the "New Hamiltonianism." The reconstruction would involve a high degree of centralization of power and central management of society and economy by the neo-Hamiltonian state. Since the culture Lind defends is the "national culture," local, regional, and ethnic variations are either unimportant or obstructive. "Why should restrictions on abortion vary between New York and Nevada?" he demands angrily. "Why should a company have to deal with entirely different rules for tax assessment in Florida and Maine? Why should a homosexual employee of IBM be considered a law-abiding citizen in Massachusetts and a felon in Alabama, to which he is transferred by the corporation he works for?"

The answer, of course, is that Americans in New York, Nevada, Florida, Maine, Massachusetts, and Alabama have rather different views regarding abortion, homosexuality, and taxes, among other matters, notwithstanding the fact that they speak the same language and share the same national culture. What never occurs to Lind is the question, why should Nevada and Alabama be "reconstructed" by the national state to have the same standards as New York and Massachusetts? Nor does it occur to him (or at least he never lets on that he knows) that such reconstruction is precisely what the overclass is trying to achieve. What Lind demands of the

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overclass and the swollen federal bureaucracy it controls is the abandonment of racial manipulation and a policy of simple nondiscrimination, without preferences. Nondiscrimination by the state is unobjectionable, but Lind wants national outlawing of all discrimination, public and private, on grounds of race, gender, and sexual preference. That policy, of course, would simply intrude the national state into the management and "radical reconstruction" of independent social institutions and private firms, and would represent a massive enhancement of the overclass state.

The "national democracy" he envisions as the political ideal of Trans-America would also involve replacing the present system of congressional representation with proportional representation, which, he hopes, would diminish the power of largely European-American parts of the country (e.g., small Western states) in favor of the power of those under non-European influence (the Northeast and those peripheral states where immigration has had a major impact). Economically, while he rightly urges restrictions on corporate expatriation, he also endorses "unsubtle, crude, old-fashioned redistribution of wealth, through taxation and public spending" as well as restrictions on campaign finances and practices, abolition of "legacy preferences" at even private universities (which he sees as merely extensions of the state), and the effective abolition of professional licensing and credentialling. Not all of these ideas are bad, but Lind's proposal is a liberal version of national socialism, "radical reconstruction" of society and redistribution of wealth by the central state, not for the purpose of fulfilling universal rights but for the ostensible goal of strengthening the nation. As John Lukacs and I have noted, the synthesis of nationalism and socialism is the strongest political force of this century; Lind is trying to keep the synthesis alive for the next century, and to reformulate it for the political left.

But one practical problem with his vision of Trans-America is that there is no realistic prospect for it to evolve. It seems to depend on a supposititious coalition of the nonwhite underclass with the white middle and working classes that the overclass is dispossessing, and not only on a coalition but on intermarriage among the races. Since it is culture and language that are important to Lind, and since he is oblivious to race even as a subjective mode of consciousness, it never occurs to him that the emergence in the last 30 years of a nonwhite racial consciousness promises not only to prevent any such national coalition but even to aggravate antagonisms, as nonwhites become the majority and continue to invoke "white racism" as the only explanation for their own failures.

Lind is correct in his criticism and rejection of both the antinational "democratic universalism" of the neoconservatives and the antiwhite as well as antinational multiculturalism of the left, and he is correct that a real American nation exists and has existed since at least the time of the War for Independence. But that nation—and the culture and language that define it—are simply inseparable from the people that created them and transmitted them, and if mass immigration and low white fertility continue for much longer, that people will cease to exist and the nation they created will die with them. The overclass bears a large part of the responsibility for that protracted murder of the nation, but Lind's analysis of the overclass misses most of what it is doing and how and why it is doing it. What he offers that class is a form of nationalism that in no way threatens its basic interests and power, a formula by which it could continue its manipulation of the country by donning nationalist garb even as it persists in managing the decline and eventual disappearance of the nation and its people. In the end, Lind's book is, even if unintentionally, a fraud. While it purports to be the charter for revolution against the overclass, it is in fact a tract for the further entrenchment and increase of overclass power. As he tells us, following Machiavelli, the overclass "has specialized in ruling by fraud," by using antinational and antiwhite forces for the furtherance of its own power, and if the ruling class is as wise as it is cunning, it will make good use of this book whose author has already proved himself so eager to be useful to it.

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LIBERAL ARTS

READING, WRITING, AND . . .

According to a United Press story last October, two teachers at Everett Middle School in San Francisco had their teaching licenses revoked after hosting a presentation by lesbian guest speakers who showed students how to use sex toys and perform homosexual intercourse. In an effort to restore the licenses, the school administrators may file an appeal to overturn the state's decision. "Gail Kaufman, a spokeswoman for the San Francisco Unified School District, said the district was shocked by the ruling."

In a related story, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reported in September that Concerned Women for America has asked its members to write to their congressmen demanding that support be terminated for the National Education Association, which has officially endorsed the concept of a national Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual History Month. The concept comes from Rodney Wilson, a St. Louis high school teacher, and was endorsed by the NEA because, in the words of its Missouri director, "surveys show a majority of Americans believe children should be taught tolerance."

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Nietzsche for Kids

by Thomas E. Woods, Jr.

The Letters of Ayn Rand
Edited by Michael S. Berliner
New York: Dutton;
681 pp., $34.95

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It is a rare polemicist who makes a successful career in fiction. But in *The Fountainhead* (1943) and *Atlas Shrugged* (1957)—and with all the subtlety of dropping a grand piano on her reader's head—Ayn Rand conveyed her harsh philosophy to a broad audience and gained what has invariably been described as a cult following. Rand's philosophy of Objectivism, which championed reason, egoism, and capitalism, viewed man as a "heroic figure." Anything that detracted from his proper stature it cast furiously aside. The church was thus a frequent target of Randian invective, for just as man should not subordinate his will to that of the mob, as the socialists demanded, neither should he kneel before any god.

While legendary for her ideological rigidity, Rand was not entirely without her virtues. In a collectivist age, she understood what made leftists tick. In her published work and now in her *Letters*, she acknowledged the impotence of mere economic theory against an onslaught that was fundamentally moral and ideological. And as an inveterate enemy of any kind of religion, she was acutely sensitive to the kind of secular eschatology and millennialism so common in socialist theory. (Rand thus dismissed both Christians and socialists as "mystics.") Hence her criticism of Ludwig von Mises, perhaps the greatest economist of the 20th century. She was a great admirer of Mises, to be sure, but, like Murray Rothbard, Rand denied that the economist *qua* activist could divorce economics from ethics and still hope to be persuasive. Mises "did prove, all right, that collectivist economics don't work," she wrote. "And he failed to convert a single collectivist."

But Rand took this appreciation of ideology to absurd lengths. In her personal life, even trivial events became charged with ideological significance. Her letters reveal, among other examples, a telling incident in which her young niece innocently asked her aunt and uncle to lend her $25. An extremely reluctant Rand agreed to lend the money, with a fixed repayment schedule, along with the following warning: "If, when the debt becomes due, you tell me that you can't pay me because you needed a new pair of shoes or a new coat or you gave the money to somebody in the family who needed it more than I do . . . I will write you off as a rotten person and I will never speak or write to you again. . . . I would like to teach you, if I can, very early in life, the idea of a self-respecting, self-supporting, responsible, *capitalistic* person."

Setting aside the pros and cons of lending this particular sum, the very idea of natural obligations was utterly foreign to Rand. "No honest person believes that he is obliged to support his relatives," she wrote. "I don't believe it and will not do it." For Rand, *every* human relationship took on the character of a market transaction. She repeatedly denounced the idea, for example, that children necessarily owe their parents even respect or love. Everything in life must be *earned*. Anything else would be irrational, and therefore anathema.

Her understanding of Christianity—from her erroneous interpretation of the injunction to "love thy neighbor as thyself" to her ignorant and contemptuous dismissal of Original Sin—was simply embarrassing. But to explain such things to Rand would have been a waste of time. She had made up her mind. For the most part, she evaluated Christianity not as a creed that could be shown to be true or false but as a violation of her own private ethical system. Indeed, while Voltaire believed that if God did not exist, it would have been necessary to create him, Rand seems to have agreed with Bukharin: if God did exist, it would be necessary to destroy Him.

This is not to suggest that Rand believed nothing that could be described as religious. Her outlook, as she explained in her introduction to the 25th anniversary edition of *The Fountainhead*, was one of "man-worship," a belief system shorn of religion's "man-debasing aspects." Protagonist Howard Roark, she explained to Frank Lloyd Wright, "represents my conception of man as god, of the absolute human ideal." It is revealing that Rand's ex-boyfriend, Nathaniel Branden, now writes books with titles like *The Power of Self-Esteem* and *The Psychology of Self-Esteem*. Man-worship must be depressing work.

If Russell Kirk was correct that the conservative shuns the confines of ideology, Rand did well to disassociate herself from the conservative movement. Here was a woman who formulated a distinct ideology and, to the exclusion of all else, proceeded to order her life, down to the smallest detail, according to its demands. Her letters will stand as a curious postscript to an exceedingly strange chapter in the history of philosophy.

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Patriotic Gore

by J.O. Tate

America First! Its History, Culture, and Politics
by Bill Kauffman
Amherst, New York: Prometheus Books;
296 pp., $25.95

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This volume is particularly notable for readers of this journal for two reasons: First, some of it has appeared in these pages, and, secondly and more importantly, the truths it conveys have been a part of the core vision of *Chronicles* as, literally, a magazine of American culture. But I think too that there are certain flaws in Kauffman's version of the essential American culture—that culture, like others, having shown contradictions we might attribute more to human nature than to political theory.

Bill Kauffman deserves much credit for the good he has done in revising some of the clichés, the received opinions that,

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dominating the media and the academy, have distorted our sense of American history. Going back to original sources, reading neglected texts, and rethinking old issues, he has refreshed our sense of ourselves and of our sense of nonsense. In doing so, he has stepped on many a toe, for there are a host of political reasons why convenient myths are broadcast today with religious fervor. The self-evident collapse of liberalism has exposed to everyone what a few have long known; the rationale of Big Government, if it was ever justified, no longer holds.

A primary rationale for Leviathan has been the warmaking power, which is why Kauffman has devoted much attention to the America Firsters of 1940-41. I think it is here that Kauffman, as a revisionist who has reconstituted the sense of forgotten days, has done his best work. He has revived some of the leaders of that movement as thinkers and as individuals, restoring them to our historical imagination. His treatment of Hamlin Garland and Amos Pinchot shows a background to isolationism that has roots both populist and patrician, and personal qualities that are appealing. His reconsideration of the literary side of isolationism is revealing, uniting in his view Robinson Jeffers, Kathleen Norris, Edgar Lee Masters, Edmund Wilson, John P. Marquand, John Dos Passos, Sinclair Lewis, and William Saroyan. His point is that before Pearl Harbor and Hitler's declaration of war, America First was a rational and respectable movement that had precedence in the best American traditions as sanctioned by Washington and Jefferson—and even Hamilton—among the founders, and by widespread and thoughtful opposition to the "splendid little war" of 1898. Kauffman has made his point, and in so doing he has examined the charges of anti-Semitism that have been leveled against the America Firsters. His conclusion, based on the evidence, is to dismiss most of those charges.

Was there indeed a movement to precipitate America's entry into the Second World War? Kauffman's look at Anglophile Hollywood reminds us of the celebration of the British Empire that was mounted by Hollywood, and shows us that subsequent revelations by William Stephenson and Michael Korda have literally vindicated the charges brought by Senator Nye. His amusing essay on Alice Roosevelt Longworth reminds us that not everyone was reverential about FDR. His book reminds us that neither was, or is, everyone reverential about the Popular Front mentality that seems to have rewritten the national history. In such pages, and others devoted to such individualists and rambunctious reformers as the late Edward Abbey and the alive and kicking John McClaughry, Kauffman is as entertaining as he is informative.

I must say that I am less satisfied with other aspects of Kauffman's presentation. His remarks on Ross Perot and Pat Buchanan have been already rendered obsolete by events, though I think Kauffman's sense that there is a national grassroots movement in the direction of isolationism has much truth to it. Application of theory is contingent at best, anyway. But I cannot share Kauffman's admiration for Gore Vidal, whose interminable rehashes of American history that everyone should know always recur to celebrating the ineffable wonderfulness of Gore Vidal, and whose fictions are either exercises in camp or, what is worse, boring historical novels that make Thomas B. Costain look like Shakespeare.

I cannot share either a related though unnecessary hostility to William F. Buckley, Jr., who, it must be said, has written the best column in this country for decades, who has been an indispensable leader of the conservative movement for those same decades, and who, more than any other prominent American in the last 40 years, has personified the once unquaint term *gentleman*. While I am at it, neither do I believe that there is any such thing as a "Catholic Right," that "gay-bashing" is an adequate term for resistance to homosexual aggression, or that anticommunism was a pretext for imperialism.

On the whole, I think that Bill Kauffman's vision of a yeoman America that looks after itself is authentic and in the best tradition of our country. But we must admit as well that there are other, baser traditions that go deep in our history—in our national psyche. Washington was tough with the Whiskey Rebellion. Jefferson—Jefferson!—precipitated Manifest Destiny and empire with the Louisiana Purchase. Who, seeing such an opportunity, would have turned it down? Why did Vermont farmboys burn houses and steal chickens in Virginia? Why did Alabama farmboys fight for independence while their leaders eyed Cuba, and more of Mexico? Americans have not resisted the masked temptation of power, and have always been contaminated by it—like the rest of humanity. Our biggest mistakes have been the subtlest ones, and insofar as they were inevitable, they were tragic.

One of Bill Kauffman's most powerful implications is that untruth is no basis for reform. Another is that now is the time to undo the damage that has been done at home. At the end of the Cold War, we have a chance to rethink our policies—and our national mythology as well. Toward that end, Kauffman has made an important and very readable contribution.

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Equal Time

by Philip Jenkins

God: A Biography
by Jack Miles
New York: Alfred A. Knopf;
446 pp., $27.50

The Origin of Satan
by Elaine Pagels
New York: Random House;
214 pp., $23.00

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If the best-seller lists are any guide, something odd is stirring in American attitudes toward religion, and specifically toward the Judeo-Christian tradition. For decades, it has been a commonplace that religious belief represents a critical demarcation line in class and intellectual belief, and that educated elites not only do not believe, they do not care. Recently, though, religious books of varying quality have been in vogue, and not just feathery items about obnoxious angels.

Far from suggesting an imminent religious revival, such works ostensibly rest on the assumption that we are now sufficiently removed from the religious dream to be able to revisit it with objectivity. God and Satan are not only dead, they are so far back in history that even their surviving relatives should not object to a frank biography. However, the two books reviewed here suggest a very

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different picture: God, like Satan, continues to nag at our consciousness so tenaciously that people still feel the need to argue with Him, even denounce Him. For all their academic detachment, both Miles and Pagels are remarkably gripped by this supposedly extinct mythology.

Jack Miles' *Biography* (presumably unauthorized) is based on the view that "Many in the West no longer believe in God, but lost belief, like a lost fortune, has effects that linger. . . . [God's] image is living still within us as a difficult but dynamic secular ideal." If God has been reduced to a mere vestige of the Western consciousness, then He can be treated as a purely literary figure, whose character development and inner conflicts can be traced through the various works in which He appears. The book takes the form of a detailed literary reading of God's appearances in the Hebrew Bible (why not the New Testament also?). His studies of particular Old Testament books are often brilliant, reinforced by a broad range of cultural references and parallels. He makes no attempt to conceal his personal love for works like Job and Ruth, and the result is a stimulating meditation that makes us want to read or reread these and the rest of the Bible.

For Miles, God the character is by no means changeless: He demonstrates many flaws, He whines and rages, He is infuriatingly contradictory, but He also grows and matures, He "comes to full consciousness of His literal uniqueness." He differs radically from any human character, lacking as He does either parent or family, or any social relationships. This makes it hard to approach, still less comprehend, "the elusive weirdness of the Lord God." However, we never forget that the development of God is reciprocal with that of the worldly and human community of Israel, which is subject to conventional historical analysis: the notion of God flourishes alongside that of His nation.

This lengthy *Biography* is based essentially on the one quirky conceit of God the literary figure, and while this is done in a shrewd and literate manner, it would not hold our attention unless Miles were closely engaged with his subject. Though he makes no assertions of personal religious belief, the book is obviously the product of decades of internal debate and presumably argument, an attempt to relate the bizarre figure on the printed page to a cosmic reality. Miles concludes with a splendidly phrased comment on the influence of this God in every aspect of our culture: "His is the restless breathing we still hear in our sleep."

Elaine Pagels has written a biography of Satan quite parallel to Miles' account of God, and she appears just as engaged both with her protagonist and with His vast influence throughout Western history. She is, however, far more explicit than Miles in using a scholarly exploration to advance a religious agenda, namely to condemn historical Christianity for an abundance of sins and flaws, most egregiously intolerance and anti-Semitism.

The Origin of Satan traces the historical evolution of the devil into what we might call the classical Miltonic sense of a Lord of Evil, master of a hellish kingdom in permanent rebellion against the Divine. She is undoubtedly correct in her assertion that this particular Satanic theme is virtually absent from the Hebrew Bible. The Genesis serpent is not originally diabolical, while the celebrated tester of Job is an official or state prosecutor of the Lord's court, a sort of supernatural Marcia Clark. The Satanic persona grows in what Christians term the intertestamental period, especially after the Maccabean Revolt: it emerges in mature form in the Dead Sea Scrolls often (but not universally) associated with the Essene sect, and in the New Testament.

In Pagels' view, the new idea of the diabolical flourished in response to social and religious conflict, especially within the branches and schools of Judaism. Jewish groups in controversy with powerful rivals painted them as servants of the forces of darkness, and quite literally as the children of Satan, tolerated by God for His own mysterious purposes until an imminent judgment (literally, "crisis") when they would be consumed like chaff. Though the Essenes certainly did this, the main culprits were that other fringe Jewish sect who followed Jesus of Nazareth. To quote the book's somewhat misleading blurb, it tells how "the writers of the four gospels condemned as creatures of Satan those Jews who refused to worship Jesus as the Messiah . . . the evangelists invoked Satan to portray their Jewish enemies as God's enemies too." The anti-Judaic polemic of the Gospels was merely unsavory while Nazarenes remained a hunted minority, but, when they gained political power, these texts provided a charter for segregation, persecution, and ultimately for attempted genocide. The "Satanic" worldview later shaped the Christian approach to other opponents, including the Roman Empire, Christian heretics, and followers of rival religions like Islam.

There is much here that is correct and perhaps self-evident, and certainly gospel passages exist where the evangelists clearly meant to suggest that Jewish leaders opposing Jesus were directly motivated by dark forces. However, *The Origin of Satan* is also inaccurate on fundamental matters, most glaringly that of origin itself. One can read the book and see "Satan" as the product of internal Jewish debates without the slightest inkling of the vast and unquestioned influence of other Near Eastern cultures, above all that of ancient Persia, whose Zoroastrian religion had for several centuries posited an eternal conflict between God and Satan, the Lords of Light and Darkness, who are portrayed in terminology that would have been instantly familiar to a medieval Christian. Persian concepts were encountered at the time of the Babylonian exile, and subsequently permeated the thought of sectarian Judaism and mainstream

LIBERAL ARTS

THE END OF RACISM

"I single Jews out because their oppression of blacks cannot go unnoticed while they disguise their evilness under the skirts and costumes of the Rabbi. Lift up the yarmulke and what you will find is the blood of billions of Africans weighing on their heads. . . . How dare any Jewish person ask me why I am obsessed with Jews. I speak of Jews because of those from their race who are always on our backs sucking the blood from the black community then pretending to be our friends."

—from a column by Sharod Baker in the October 12 issue of the Columbia Spectator, *a student newspaper at Columbia University.*

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Christianity. Dr. Pagels' failure to discuss these roots is remarkable.

Similarly, her book lays great emphasis on Jewish-Christian conflict at the time of the great Jewish-Roman war of 66-73 A.D., a pivotal event reflected in the Gospel of Mark, the "wartime" polemic with which Pagels begins her study. It would be embarrassing for her thesis to have a prewar Christian account which is thoroughly imbued with Satanic imagery, but which fails to associate the devil with the Jews or the Jewish leadership: probably what we possess in the hypothetical Gospel of Q, the reconstructed common source of Matthew and Luke. It is Q which shows us the devil offering Jesus the kingdoms of this world, of which he is master; Q shows Jesus being accused of exorcising through Beelzebub, prince of demons; controversially, Q may be the source of Satan falling like lightning from heaven. In Matthew's reading, the Q passage known as the Lord's Prayer ends with the often mistranslated petition to be delivered not from evil as such but from the Evil One (*ho Poneros*). Q, in short, suggests an early Christianity thoroughly familiar with the diabolical and demonic, but absolutely not in the context of the Jews or the Jewish leadership. Only with a substantial dose of special pleading can Dr. Pagels sustain her "Satanic = Jewish" interpretation of the canonical Gospels.

There is a great deal wrong with this book, in its basic argument no less than its horrid editing. Quotations and ideas are generously repeated, as for example in the paragraph from Origen which makes a nice point on page 139, and returns like an old friend eight pages later. But for all its flaws, the book clearly meets a public demand: like Miles' *Biography*, it spent several weeks at the head of *Publisher's Weekly*'s chart of best-selling religion books in hardcover, and it is likely to remain on the reading lists of church discussion groups for years to come. As with her earlier *Gnostic Gospels* (1979), this popular appeal is at least as interesting as anything in the book itself, and demonstrates the immense success of her own strong religious agenda. Pagels' readers seem hungry for a religion rooted in familiar Christian ideas and terminology, but lacking traditional constraints, and they believe they find it depicted in the work of a certified scholar willing to reject boring or difficult orthodoxies, and to rediscover the thought of those daring "radical Christians." *Origin of Satan* finds notions of absolute supernatural evil not only to be founded on the ephemeral controversies of the first century, but also associated with horrifying religious bigotry. Progress in religion is to be achieved by replacing the archaic concept that "otherness is evil" with Jesus' declaration that forgiveness is divine.

We might take Pagels' book to illustrate the exact opposite point. If she shows so convincingly that the very earliest Christian thought is so pervaded with notions of the diabolical, is it really possible to imagine a genuine modern Christianity which ignores the element of supernatural evil, which speaks of redemption and salvation without daring to imply what one is being redeemed or saved from?

Philip Jenkins heads the religious studies program at Penn State University. His latest book, Pedophiles and Priests: Anatomy of a Social Crisis, *is forthcoming from Oxford University Press.*

Highway Music

by Gregory McNamee

A Thousand Miles from Nowhere: Trucking Two Continents
by Graham Coster
New York: North Point Press/Farrar, Straus & Giroux;
275 pp., $20.00

◆

American literature, Wallace Stegner once observed, is not so much about place as motion: we are a restless people, and we write restless books that hurtle us from A to B with a blur to mark our passage. Discounting Stegner's own lovely evocations of place in books like *Wolf Willow* and *Crossing to Safety*, one has only to think of the *Pequod* and Huck Finn's raft, of Francis Parkman's horse and Neal Cassady's convertible, of Ken Kesey's magic bus and Tom Wolfe's chrome Spam-in-a-can rocket ship, even of John Muir's buniony feet, to see his point.

It is strange that in the catalog of contraptions and creatures that have propelled our literature, the semitruck should not figure more prominently than it does. Why do we have no great novels about Macks and Roadmasters and Peterbilts, no epic poems about balling the jack doing double nickels on the dime? Country music would be markedly poorer without our native leviathans; where would Red Sovine and Hank Snow be without them? Transcontinental trucks have left scarcely a dent in our writing, although the image of them rolling down the endless highways of America is a ready-made metaphor, and the whine and hum of 18 wheels on asphalt is an authentically American idiom, as indigenous to these shores as jazz and popcorn.

That it should take a British writer to introduce the diesel-belching rig to us as an object of literary investigation is another curiosity. That is just what the novelist Graham Coster—the author, fittingly, of a book called *Train, Train*—does with *A Thousand Miles from Nowhere*, a good serious book of literary journalism that coincidentally marks the return of the North Point Press imprint.

The British have always produced fine travel writing, a body of work sometimes marked by a certain snotty disdain for the local subjects and a quickness to take credit where credit is not always due. Among American travel writers, only Paul Theroux seems to have imported these attitudes, but Coster will have none of them. He has an open humor and a pleasant way, as when he explains that in his own country, his interest in trucks is not widely shared:

> In Britain we like trains. We invented them. Therefore we don't like trucks. Trains keep to their own neat ribbons of rail and stop at stations a mile out of town; trucks barge through half-timbered high streets and vibrate our Victorian sewage systems to pieces. A railway track says 'within limits'; the tidal wave of spray that smacks you sideways on a rainswept M4 says 'free for all.'

When Coster undertakes to learn something of how a big rig—"artics" they're called in Britain, misspelling included—is driven, he enters a world of power and terror. An instructor tells him, "You will be in charge of a very large killing machine," and he learns that in guiding 11 tons that stretch 50 feet behind the driver's seat, "you're an ocean-liner captain looking through your tele-

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scope for icebergs," icebergs that include Volkswagens, horse-drawn carts, and just about every other vehicle Europe can toss out on the highways.

Theoretical education behind him, Coster is off to Russia—"straight on past the Pizza Hut, left at the Kremlin"—and ready to give the reader lessons in economics, sociology, and history. To the truckers of the European Economic Community, we learn, Hungary is the pirate nation of the highway, underbidding at catastrophically low rates to secure trucking for its huge state-run conglomerates; to sail under Hungarian colors is to hoist the Jolly Roger. In Europe, as in America, trucks account for more than 90 percent of all goods hauled, and, with markets expanding everywhere, Coster does not quite come out and say that nationalist tensions are likely to enter into the business with increasing frequency. The internationalist tensions are strange enough: thanks to EEC rules, Coster remarks, a contract trucker will haul a trailer full of ice cream from England to Russia, only to pick up another trailer full of ice cream in Germany to cart back across the channel: coals to Newcastle, sops to the tutelary spirits of overregulated trade.

Coster is generous with details, remarking that truckers are obsessed with the cleanliness of their vehicles not only as a mark of pride but also as a matter of economics; he is told dark cautionary tales of one driver "whose dedication to squalor had managed to knock a good thousand [pounds] off the resale price of his truck." As a travel writer must, he instructs in local custom, especially the ubiquity of Snickers bars as the ultimate road food. "They are as nutritious and healthy as a plate of eggs and bacon," he writes without irony. He is less forthcoming with other elements of the trucker's diet; as Bruce Chatwin said in *The Songtimes*, the interiors of Australia and other vast inland empires were settled by big trucks and amphetamines.

Longtime English haulers, Coster writes, dream of trucking America, piloting an "indestructible Kenilworth, the Harley-Davidson of trucks, with a wide road and a distant horizon to itself." The second half of *A Thousand Miles from Nowhere* takes Coster from the Eurasian plain to the interior of America, and here he can only marvel at the differences. "Continental truckers in Europe had the border queues for Russia and Hungary," he writes. "In America you had Texas." In Europe, truckers keep their trailers spotless; in America, Coster finds them festooned with slogans like "If You Can't Run with the Big Dogs Stay on the Porch," "Intellect Is Invisible to the Man Who Has None," and "Nothing Needs Reforming So Much as Other People's Habits," leading him to remark brightly, "If Schopenhauer had had the chance to visit Truckworld . . . he'd have seen that the Road Kill Café T-shirts said it better."

A Thousand Miles from Nowhere works at every level, but it leaves a few things unsaid. I wish, having marveled throughout my travels in the mountainous West why more big rigs don't go plunging off the cliffside ledges that often pass for highways in these parts, that Coster had given us a bit more "thick description"—or even a heavier dose of gonzo—on the actual business of operating a truck. I would like him to have explained why truckers find it necessary to dog the tails of small cars at great rates of speed in the most inclement weather, why they eat like Elvis, why so many people are lured to a hard life of hemorrhoids and bad coffee on the road.

But I am glad to have what Coster gives us here: a good antiromantic look at the world of trucking, a glimpse inside the cab. "Travel writers may still essay transnavigation of the globe by antique steam-engine or renovated sail-boat, but trade doesn't," he remarks, and his devotion to the real world is welcome. It is also a challenge to American writers to do him one better on their own turf, and to bring the big rigs within the scope of our literature.

Gregory McNamee's newest books are In the Presence of Wolves *and* The Sierra Club Desert Reader.

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Letter From Inner Israel

by Jacob Neusner

The Goyim Aren't Always Wrong

◆

A small people with a distinctive religion, the Jews throughout history have tried to avoid imitating the Gentiles (that is, everybody else), lest assimilation destroy the faith and the group that embodies it. In fact, Scripture's passionate denunciation of idolatry led the ancient rabbis, "our sages of blessed memory," to condemn certain practices under the rubric of "the ways of the Amorite," meaning, don't do things the way *they* do. Philip Roth captures the psychology in *Portnoy's Complaint*: "They'll eat anything, and they'll do anything too."

But there is assimilation, and then there is *assimilation*. Some decades ago, the Chancellor of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, Gerson D. Cohen, gave a lecture, "The Blessings of Assimilation in Jewish History," that scandalized the faithful, because he saw good in adopting Gentile virtue and the beauty of other faiths. As between segregationists and integrationists, most American Jews concur and opt for integration, while preserving their own distinctive character. They do so because most Jews in this country take a more positive view of Gentiles. They wish to maintain a distinctive group life, but in ways comparable to those of their Gentile friends and neighbors.

True, federal racism has encouraged homogenization by classifying Jews as "whites," just as the Israeli system assigns American Jews to the class of "Anglo-Saxons," which would certainly have surprised not only Ethelred the Unready but also King Edward I ("the pious"), who found our forebears insufficiently Anglo-Saxon and booted them out of England. But the upshot is, we do not live behind ghetto walls and do not want to.

Still, the advent of Christmas brings an annual crisis into Jewish homes. Starting in early October and ending in January, the season underscores our differences: that it's a rite we Jews cannot and do not practice. But while underscoring our difference, the holiday season also highlights our sameness. With the Supreme Court's declaration that Christmas is really a secular, cultural occasion, the yearly explosion of greed and sentimentality in the name of piety no longer requires even the pretense of a religious occasion. True Christianity—Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox alike—sees matters otherwise and now joins Judaism as another minority, one exiled from a common culture that has ruined its sacred occasion. Only Easter, more eggs and bunnies than the Risen Christ, still reminds the world that, once upon a time everywhere, and here and now in some isolated sectors, Christianity was and remains a great religion, not merely an excuse for giving, getting, and gorging.

One Christian practice that I admire is the lighting up of homes for the holy season. Here in St. Petersburg, where I live on the shores of Tampa Bay, the practice proves especially compelling. The lighted homes across the bayou, casting colored shadows on dark water, meet the light of the yachts on the bay nearby. On a spit of land, on one side of an inlet, Hanukkah candles are lit, from night to night, and across the waves, on the other side, Christmas lights respond. Somehow the dark knights of the Militant Separationists have not found their way to our corner of the world, to drive our holidays of light, both Judaic and Christian, off public property.

Ever since making our home here five and a half years ago, my wife and I have enjoyed the lights over the water. Last year, I got a leaflet offering a curious service: "We will light up your home, in your own design, supplying the wiring, lights, and the rest, putting up the decoration by December 1 and taking it down January 15, for $500." What a great idea, I thought—I can have them light our house by the bay, with its balcony overlooking the park and the beach and the gentle waves, with a huge Hanukkah Menorah covering the front of the house, perhaps, too, a picture of Judah Maccabee, and a splash of light to stand for the enduring oil lamp. Since the Christians use green and red, we might use orange, blue, and white. Cooler heads prevailed.

But that led me to wonder, what would be so bad if we did? After all, living in the benign mixture of Southern and Midwestern culture that defines west-central Florida, who would misunderstand? Our neighbors would be no more bemused than they are by the *sukkah* (tabernacle) where we eat our meals from one fall to the next in our backyard, covering it with palm branches cut from our, and our neighbors', palm trees (they are instructed by me exactly what date to have their palms trimmed, so they follow the lunar calendar to make sure that, on the first full moon after the autumnal equinox, we have plenty of front for the *sukkah* covering). True, my neighbor at first thought it was an outdoor Jacuzzi, and (fully clothed) we eat meals there (at least, at night, when it is cool enough).

Why not celebrate our holiday by adopting a practice that our Christian neighbors use to mark theirs—only in a Judaic manner? After all, some of our most valued rites and holy occasions are adaptations, and the principal events of the Christian calendar, Easter and Pentecost, not to mention the Sabbath/Sunday, come to Christianity from Judaism. In fact, Jews give gifts on Hanukkah, so their children will not feel left out, and no one today deems us less distinctive for that. If it makes our kids feel good to define "being Jewish" as getting gifts for eight nights, instead of only one day or night like their Christian friends, so be it.

Indeed, I can think of other Christian practices that would make Judaism a stronger and more distinctive religion in this country—regular church-going in large numbers, rather than the pitiful pick-up crowd that the Reform and Conservative synagogues get Sabbath mornings; self-respect and pride in their public celebrations, rather than the Marrano-type dissimulation that all but the Orthodox Jews pretend. Indeed, in my view, the most American of all Judaisms is Lubovitch Hasidism, with its huge menorahs in front of city halls all over

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the country, its massive congregations on Sabbaths, its pleasure in public witness to the faith in countless ways, its unashamed love of God. And I am inclined to think that when Jews begin decorating their homes for Hanukkah, the Lubovitch Hasidim will lead the way. Then people will think it is very Jewish and forget where it came from, the way they think that the strange clothes of the Lubovitchers are quintessentially Jewish, not remembering that the Polish nobility wore them 300 years ago.

One of the glories of Judaic life throughout the ages has been its capacity to adopt the great, and accessible, gifts of the Gentiles. If we gave the world One God and the Torah, we got a good reward. Other peoples gave us what we made distinctively our own, from my grandmother's special dishes, which turn out to be pure Polish, to our own, special formulation of classical Greek philosophy in the Mishnah, the first Judaic holy book after Scripture ("the Old Testament").

Just now, someone very smart daydreamed in my presence, "Why can't we sing 'Adon Olam' (the hymn that contains the principles of the faith, sung at synagogue worship on the Sabbath), to the tune of 'Amazing Grace'?" So I went and I tried it, and it works. The hymn for Hanukkah, "Mooz tsur" ("Rock of Ages") is sung to the tune of an old German drinking song, but when we sing it, it is made holy.

So why not add to the light of the winter solstice not only a Hanukkah Menorah in the window, but Judah Maccabee in front, facing my neighbor's Santa Claus and reindeer—facing them and, with all due respect, facing them down? We really do have a religion of our own, and in this country, which has transcended tolerance and accorded authentic freedom, we can enjoy it and even share its pleasures with our Christian neighbors.

Jacob Neusner is Distinguished Research Professor of Religious Studies at the University of South Florida in Tampa and Visiting Professor of Religion at Bard College. His most recent book is Price of Excellence *(Continuum).*

Letter From England

by Derrick Turner

Multiculturalism in Metroland

◆

As recently as 1882, Neasden in north London was an obscure hamlet of several large houses, a few cottages, and a smithy. Then the Metropolitan Railway and, later, the North Circular Road went through and thousands of often jerry-built houses sprang up along their lengths, as London bit ravenously into Middlesex. Although Neasden rapidly became a location for railway depots and factories, it also gained a reputation for being synonymous with featureless, smug suburbia. "Neasden, the borough everybody's pleased in," went a comic song in John Betjeman's evocative documentary about the Metropolitan Railway, *Metroland*, and the humorous conceit has been raised into common parlance by the satirical magazine *Private Eye*.

Few events, then, could have so pointedly exemplified the eclipse of old London and the possibly terminal decline of Anglicanism as the recent opening of a vast, phantasmogorical Hindu temple in the middle of Neasden, at the end of an unremarkable residential street. Few would have been able to envision the ornate, impressive structure that has sprung up over the last two and a half years (although it does slightly resemble nearby Wembley Stadium), which is now the largest Hindu temple in the Western world.

When Pramukh Swami Maharaj, the leader of the Swaminarayan movement which has built the temple, had a vision of a Hindu edifice in Britain that would "last a thousand years," the money and labor were speedily forthcoming from Hindus around the world, in a selfless corporate gesture that should make most Britons and Christians blush. Thousands of tons of specially imported Italian marble, Bulgarian limestone, and wood were handcarved by 1,500 volunteers in India, and assembled under the supervision of an English architect, into a sumptuous shrine, deified in its own right, where every part of the temple relates to a part of the human body, and the 13 idols—including the trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, Siva's wife Kali, Kama (god of sexual love), and Gouri/Isani (goddess of abundance)—may be appropriately idolized. Some of the carved designs have not been used for six centuries, and no steel was used in the construction, so as not to attract magnetic fields which might "disturb meditation."

All of the newsreaders and reporters who covered the temple story seemed to have been told to smile as widely as they could when they introduced the item, so as to avert possible complaints of subconscious racial discrimination. The coverage focused on the understandable happiness of the Hindus and the architecture of what one reporter called "the Taj Mahal of the West." One of the Hindu coordinators said that this will "put Neasden on the map," implying that tourists would come from all over the world to marvel, and one reporter with an Asian name showed her Hindu slip when she said how it "promised sanctuary." It is interesting to consider what would have been the media reaction, or the reaction of local Labour councillors, if any Christian sect which had a heritage of belief in a caste system, ophiolatry, *suttee*, and incarcerating menstruating girls had begun building a cathedral in Neasden. Undoubtedly the commentary would, at best, have been sneering and, at worst, there would have been dark whispers of sexist, elitist, vaguely "racist" conspiracies.

White, and presumably nominally Christian, locals showed confusion when quizzed by reporters about how they felt. They tried very hard not to appear negative, although it was obvious they did not like it. One local commented that the temple "will cause lots of problems—parking and suchlike," but you could not help suspecting that he was really thinking of more elemental "problems"—such as the permanent symbol of his own territorial, social, and spiritual displacement that will now confront him every time he walks down his street.

This was the only dark note cast in the fulsome reportage, except when one reporter mentioned, in passing, that Hare Krishnas were having problems with their too-small temple a few miles away. One was left with the disquieting impression that soon there would be an

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equally massive, massy Krishna temple in London—which seems inevitable, given the feebleness of (especially Anglican) Christianity, the anti-Western bias of the multiculturalist ideology, and the 1991 Census statistics which demonstrate that white Britons in the borough of Brent will almost certainly be in the minority within 20 years. John Major's famous speech to the contrary, it looks as if there will not be too many spinsters cycling to Mass in Neasden in 2015.

The faith implicit in the raising of this temple serves only to underline our corresponding Western lack of religiosity, from which we suffer greatly, as T.S. Eliot foresaw. A society without faith, without a collective conscience or sense of objective morality, which is cynical and prone to materialism, and whose established church has been secularized and politicized is a society lacking an essential cohesive agent. Genuine religiosity, particularly Anglican religiosity, although not dead, is dying, to be replaced by a frivolous and nonjudgmental "Thought for the Day" kind of approach which recently found its logical conclusion in the excesses of the so-called "Nine o'clock Service" in Sheffield, a rave "service" run by a former rock band manager under the auspices of the Church of England, with a "healing process" which involved sexual assault on some 20 foolish women.

I am not, I hope, insulting Hindus or Hinduism, an admirable religion which has long had Western adherents, when I say that I find this magnificent building symbolic of doom—doom for the dying, gentle Anglo-Saxon London of *Metroland* and, ultimately, for the dwindling England of spartan Protestant and ornamented Catholic churches alike. No amount of Yoga, TM, anthropomorphism, vegetarianism, or Gandhian civil disobedience—not even the edifying *Upanishads* or *Laws of Manu*—can wholly compensate for the permanent loss of European and Christian civility, feeling, and thought, which is imminent in at least some parts of central London.

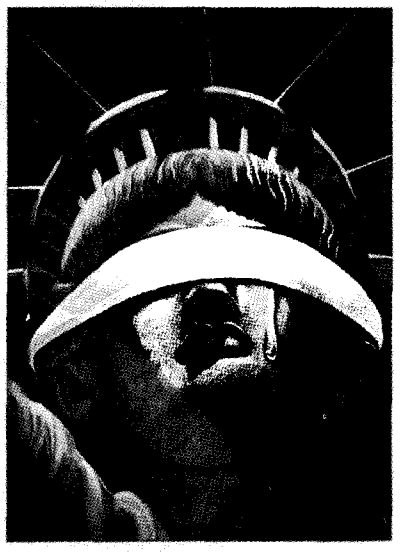
It is impossible that the materialists who now dominate the established churches will be able to reinvigorate Christianity—indeed, in cynical old Britain, it is unlikely that anybody could ever do that. And it is equally unlikely that the professional minority-masseurs who dominate the media and inner-city local government will help in the reestablishment of Christian, European culture in Neasden, or at least not attack it elsewhere: there is no practical gain—quite the contrary—nor is there even any moralistic self-satisfaction to be gained in standing up for the West. As the old Hindu proverb puts it, "When an elephant is in trouble, even a frog will kick him."

Derrick Turner is the editor of Right Now!

CONCERNING IMMIGRATION . . .

IMMIGRATION
AND THE
AMERICAN IDENTITY

SELECTIONS FROM
Chronicles: A Magazine of American Culture, 1985-1995



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SOCIETY

Race, Aids, and Sexual Behavior

by J. Philippe Rushton

For the past decade or so, my research has focused on assessing racial differences in brain size and intelligence, sexual habits and fertility, personality and temperament, and speed of maturation and longevity. Startling and alarming to many people is my conclusion that if all people were treated the same, most racial differences would not disappear. I have found that Asians and Africans consistently average at opposite ends of a continuum ranging over 60 anatomical and social variables, with Europeans intermediate. Based on my studies, I have proposed a gene-based evolutionary theory of racial patterns.

The political fallout from my work has been intense. After my findings became public at the 1989 meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the premier of Ontario called for my dismissal. The Ontario Attorney General's office launched a six-month investigation of whether I had contravened "hate laws." I was excoriated in the media, and disruptions at the university culminated in my being forced by the administration to teach classes by videotape. (Of course, it could be worse. In many countries, people are jailed or executed for voicing unacceptable scholarly opinions.)

All the above is by way of introduction to the most recent statistics I have compiled on race and AIDS. (Some of the most ferocious attacks on me have come as a result of my studies of race differences in sexual behavior.) In 1989, I published a paper in *Social Science and Medicine* examining the worldwide distribution of 100,410 cases of AIDS that had been reported as of July 1, 1988, to the World Health Organization. By April 1, 1990, that figure had grown to 237,110, showing an 18-month doubling time and a crystallization of the racial pattern of the pandemic. Subsequent calculations published by me in the 1990 issue of *Social Science and Medicine* showed that black Caribbean countries had as high an incidence of AIDS as did African countries. When the figures were calculated on a per capita basis, the three most affected countries in the world were in the Caribbean—Bermuda, the Bahamas, and French Guiana.

The fast rate of increase continues (currently 20 percent a year) and, as of January 3, 1995, World Health Organization figures showed that over one million adult cases had been reported from 192 countries since the onset of the pandemic. Allowing for under-diagnosis and incomplete reporting, the true figure is estimated to be over 4.5 million, and nearly 20 million people are estimated to have the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) that causes the disease.

While modes of transmission are universally the same—through sex or blood or from mother to fetus—it is clear that HIV has spread disproportionately among racial groups. Because of political sensitivities, many deny that AIDS originated in Africa, and African and Caribbean countries report only a fraction of their actual number of AIDS cases. But countries with large numbers of people of African ancestry have a disproportionate AIDS problem. In some urban areas of Africa, well over one in four adults are infected.

In African and Caribbean countries, the AIDS virus is transmitted predominantly through heterosexual intercourse. The age and sex distributions of HIV infection rates are similar to those of other sexually transmitted diseases, with higher prevalence among younger sexually active women. At the other extreme, it is a characteristic feature of AIDS in China and Japan that most sufferers are hemophiliacs. An intermediate amount of HIV infection is apparent in Europe and the Americas, where it has occurred predominantly among homosexual men.

Specifically, I computed the number of cases per 100,000 people to give an indication of the relative seriousness of the epidemic between countries with different population sizes. On this measure, Canada has a rate of 38 cases per 100,000 people, making it the 39th most infected country in the world. Of the other leading countries, 22 are in Africa, 11 are in the Caribbean, four are in Europe, and the other is the United States. None are in Asia. The 2,000-mile swathe of infected Caribbean countries from Bermuda in the Atlantic through the Bahamas off the coast of Florida to French Guiana in South America is especially striking and has rarely (if ever) been explained.

I have also examined the most recent figures from the United States (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report, Vol. 6, No. 2). Data as of January 1, 1995, confirm that blacks are overrepresented in every exposure category. The nearly 30 million blacks in the United States, with a cumulative total of 146,283 cases, have a rate of 488 cases per 100,000 population (one out of every 205 black people). This rate is equivalent to that of the black populations of Africa and the Caribbean. Though only 12 percent of the population, blacks accounted for 33 percent of the AIDS figures. Black men accounted for 34 percent of all male cases, including 20 percent of the "Men Who Have Sex With Men" category; black women accounted for 55 percent of female cases; and black children accounted for 56 percent of all pediatric cases. Whites and Asians in the United States have rates of 107 and 41 per 100,000 people, somewhat higher than, but proportionately comparable to, their counterparts in Europe and the Pacific.

One suggestion often made is that blacks in the United States have such a high prevalence of AIDS because of intravenous drug use. Among black men, 36 to 43 percent did acquire the disease in this way, but between 50 and 57 percent acquired it through sexual transmission, eight percent heterosexually (compared to one percent of whites). Of all 24,358 adult cases transmitted heterosexually (seven percent of the total), 14,143 (or 58 percent) involved blacks, with another 20 percent being Hispanic. Hispanics, of course, are a linguistic group; racially a proportion is black or partly black, especially in New York and Puerto Rico. Overall, since my 1989 publication, the proportion of blacks in

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U.S. AIDS figures increased from 26 to 31 percent, Hispanics increased from 14 to 17 percent, Asians and Amerindians combined held at less than one percent, and whites decreased from 59 to 51 percent.

In my book *Race, Evolution, and Behavior*, I documented numerous surveys carried out around the world showing racial differences in frequency of sexual intercourse. The results show that both before and after marriage, people of African ancestry are more sexually active than Europeans, who are more sexually active than Asians. Concomitant racial differences are found in sexual attitudes, with Asian groups being least permissive and African groups most permissive, and European groups in between. Typically, black samples are found to have had intercourse earlier, with a greater number of casual partners and with a more positive attitude to sexual display than either white or Asian samples. I suggest that these differences in sexual behavior are the cause of racial differences in the prevalence of AIDS.

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EDUCATION

Whatever Happened to the New Math?

by Ralph A. Raimi

School math textbooks 50 years ago were not written by mathematicians. The typical author was the chairman of a school science department somewhere, in a district large enough to make writing a textbook remunerative even if nobody else in the country used it. That he was ignorant of mathematics was unnoticed by an ignorant public and cadre of teachers, and that his prose was abominable was perhaps admired, so strong was the general (mistaken) belief that mathematics is not written in prose.

Teachers, mainly trained in schools of education, knew little about mathematics to begin with; many habitually ignored anything demanding in their textbooks and took refuge in teaching the algorithms they had themselves learned as children. Textbook publishers wouldn't dare print a book containing something its predecessors did not contain, because no school would buy it. And what real mathematician would spend his time writing a school textbook that nobody would use?

Euclid's *Elements*, for example, history's greatest textbook of reason, had been bowdlerized, reduced, or supplanted by products that were sold as more practical, when the real attraction was their supposed "teachability": interest rates, surveyors' triangles, and rigid algebraic rituals for the college-bound. Anyone with half a mind could recite them, but neither teacher nor student wasted a minute on their meaning or utility. Worse, each generation's authors added a bit of new misunderstanding to what might have been right in earlier editions.

Sputnik gave us a chance to break this gridlock. The 1945 atom bomb had already given physical scientists and mathematicians a prestige without precedent; now the Russian success of 1957 added fear, which paid better. The year 1958 therefore kicked off the largest and best financed single reform effort ever seen in mathematics education, the School Mathematics Study Group (SMSG), upon which the National Science Foundation (NSF) spent millions of dollars over a 12-year period.

Edward Begle, a professor of mathematics at Yale University, was chosen to head the new organization, and gave up topology for this new and unfamiliar calling. The existing professional education bureaucracy, later called "the PEB" by William Duren, a reform mathematician of the time, was thus suddenly outflanked by a new party. That is, the teachers' colleges, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, and all the state and federal departments of education and nurture, who though loosely organized did still govern all teaching below the college level, were compelled to follow our lead.

What Begle saw in the schools could not be cured by a friendly environment, good lighting, or deep pedagogical insight, so long as the textbooks, and the mathematical conceptions of thousands of teachers, amounted to a pack of lies. He first assembled several separate teams of mathematicians to write exemplary textbooks, eventually covering all grades from one to 12 and a bit more, that would be free of the ignorance, ambiguity, opacity, irrelevance, and tedium of the traditional curriculum. He included practicing schoolteachers in each writing team, hoping (vainly as it turned out) to keep his textbooks within the realm of the classroom possible; but the mathematicians drove the effort. SMSG invited all commercial publishers to study, copy, or plagiarize these texts, which SMSG placed in the public domain as models.

Simultaneously, SMSG established hundreds of institutes, i.e., special college courses for existing teachers, some in the summers and some on Saturdays, to which eventually thousands (paid by the NSF) came to study the new material, to practice its pedagogy under the eyes of SMSG authors and master teachers, and then to carry the books back into the world for classroom testing on a nationwide scale. The writing groups would reassemble summer after summer, study the reports from the field, and revise the texts and the teachers' guides for the next set of institutes and experimental classes.

Almost half of the nation's high school teachers of mathematics attended at least one such institute during the 12-year life of SMSG; but an equivalent seeding was impossible for elementary school teachers, who outnumbered the high school math teachers ten to one. While there were some institutes for elementary school teachers, these were mainly for experimentation. The SMSG books themselves achieved unexpectedly wide circulation, and were indeed, as Begle had urged, enthusiastically if often ignorantly imitated, even (or especially) at the more elementary levels. And the research literature produced in the colleges of education, and the journals of classroom practice written and read by teachers, were marked throughout the 60's by obeisance to the SMSG program.

The result, after 12 years, was total failure. By any reasonable measure, and measures were taken, school mathematics was worse off in 1975 than it had been in 1955. The idiocies of the older curriculum had in most places been removed, but often to be replaced with new ones. Tom Lehrer's 1965 song "New Math," lampooning the pretentious language used to justify an inability to calculate, had the mathematical com-

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munity itself laughing at the follies committed in the name of promoting a better understanding of mathematics.

To take an example, the language of the "theory of sets" had been basic among mathematicians for 100 years, and can ease enormously the path to much that people find perplexing in school. Anyone should be able to learn enough about sets and this vocabulary in a very few hours to permit him to understand an honestly presented course of high school mathematics, including all the traditional material and more; his savings in time will have exceeded those few hours a hundredfold, and in understanding immeasurably. SMSG introduced set theory into its first books, which as it happened were for the high school level. Later books, written for grade school years, also introduced the subject of sets, hoping later to make use of it when revised high school books were written. During SMSG's short life, therefore, a chapter on sets appeared at the opening of every year's textbook, unfortunately making it appear as if sets were the be-all and end-all of New Math. This redundancy was copied into the commercial texts of the time as well, and teachers leaped on it to the neglect of more prosaic matters, like getting a correct answer in arithmetic.

Easy as it looked, teachers didn't always get the notion of "set" straight themselves, and could teach the most egregious confusions as truth. One textbook lesson plan suggested that the teacher, as an example, distinguish the subset "boys" from the subset "girls" (in the set "this class") by asking the boys to stand, and then the girls to stand, and so on; one teacher I heard about then asked "the set of boys" to stand up. But while boys, being human, can stand, sets cannot. So fine a distinction may be meaningless to a third-grade teacher, or to anyone who has never made real use of it; but if exactly that distinction is not made plain, and into a habit of mind and speech, the notion of set is valueless in later mathematical reasoning.

On the other hand, SMSG and its imitators were also guilty of some pointless pedantry, ridiculous even if logically correct: "Write the numeral that names the number solving $3x - 7 = 8$," for example. That's not even English. If you actually ask a mathematician to write down his phone number, he will cheerfully hand you a numeral without a moment's hesitation or apology. He can make the distinction, sure, but he only does it when it counts.

Just the other day I heard an aging academic say that Marxism hasn't failed, because it hasn't been tried—not an original trope, for we have heard the same of Christianity for ages. Had SMSG really been tried? The mass of American teachers—and children—were not, in the end, exposed to, let alone taught, what the SMSG mathematicians prescribed. But to plead thus is only to evade responsibility.

Oliver Wendell Holmes once wrote that the American Constitution is an experiment, "as all life is an experiment." Experimental scientists like Holmes understand that reality is not to be pushed around, neither by nine old men nor by a prestigious bunch of mathematical geniuses with a pipeline to the U.S. Treasury. Their prestige was unchallenged, their genius without peer, and their pipeline of pure gold; but the realities overwhelmed them. The cadre of teachers already out there had preexisting interests and capabilities, the public patience was shorter than experiments that could lose a generation of children, and the educational experts, the PEB, was gathering its strength for the political battle that finally turned the pipeline back in their direction.

Toward the end, Begle wrote, "I see little hope for any further substantial improvements in mathematics education until we turn mathematics education into an experimental science, until we abandon our reliance on philosophical discussion based on dubious assumptions, and instead follow a carefully constructed pattern of observation and speculation, the pattern so successfully employed by the physical and natural scientists." Begle himself died a disappointed man six years later, though he had continued after SMSG to work brilliantly toward a proper study of mathematics education. His disappointment was for the future more than for SMSG, because he foresaw correctly that PEB-sponsored research in education would not follow his sensible, if unexciting, prescription.

Meanwhile, the PEB, having taken back the schools, resumed educating its future leaders with exactly the "philosophic discussion based on dubious assumptions" Begle had warned of. It was the education of teachers that Begle had come to see as the truly intractable problem. SMSG, for all its faults, could solve the problem of choosing, pacing, and stating an excellent curriculum; another ten years' experimentation would surely have removed what Duren called its "excessive enthusiasm for logical language," for example. But the SMSG institutes had been hopelessly inadequate to the training of teachers, and the PEB is perforce in charge of the next generations. There is no market in sight for even a perfect SMSG curriculum.

The textbooks today are again not written by mathematicians, and indeed show no sign of SMSG influence. They have eliminated the "set theory" that they had hailed in 1975, and they are quite silent about numerals; so much is to the good. On the other hand, they contain even less mathematics than they did in 1955, except that at the college-preparatory upper levels some of them, intended for superior students and teachers, are a great deal better. The books for grades one to eight come packaged for teachers with mountainous "Teachers' Guides," in which the mathematics is swamped into insignificance by the instructions on engaging the attention and improving the self-esteem of the students.

The general mathematical literacy, not notably improved by SMSG, has continued its decline under PEB management as well. Developmental psychology, not mathematics, informs the seminar rooms of the schools and the teachers colleges, while at the higher levels the research journals of the PEB are filled with what almost every mathematician today would condemn as being at least a waste of time.

Perhaps an example is in order. The anthology *Perspectives on Research in Effective Mathematics Teaching*, published by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, contains these insights:

> As opposed to the contextbound ascription of meaning in everyday language use, scientific theories are presumed to rest upon the strict use of their technical terms. Researchers often pick the labels (the words, the 'signifiers') for their key categories following a contiguity relation between the concept (the 'signified') they have in mind and one specific of the many facets of meaning ascribed to the word in everyday use. . . . The construction of a metatheory capable of executing the critical comparison of com-

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peting theories will fail due to the impossibility of an uniting meta-perspective and because of the (related) nonexistence of a universal language. How to proceed, then?

Good question.

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POLITICS

Merry Kwanzaa

by Nicholas Stix

What are you doing this year for Kwanzaa? This was once a ludicrous question, but in today's urban America public agencies, newspapers, and businesses trip over themselves showing their unqualified support for this anomalous occasion. Presented now as a religious, if not a national event, Kwanzaa immediately follows the "Judeo-Christian" holidays. It is one thing to wear mismatched socks, and another altogether to mix and match politics and religion. After all, those who have most vociferously supported Kwanzaa's establishment are the same folks, white and black, who are always on the lookout for displays of religious faith as benign as a menorah or Christmas tree in a public square.

Kwanzaa is so established in government-sanctioned public life that an otherwise valuable, remedial writing textbook, *Evergreen*, reports that "Maulana Karenga introduced Kwanzaa to America in 1966." Kwanzaa was not *introduced* to, but *invented* in America by Karenga (a/k/a Ron Everett). It is one of those pseudo-African practices, like naming children "Tawana" or "Lakeisha," or wearing "crown" caps, that confirm real Africans' worst misgivings about American blacks.

Kwanzaa exists to enhance black Americans' self-esteem via a zero-sum calculus that requires them to insult "European Americans." The very term "African American" bespeaks superiority to its black users; "European American" is a half-educated obscurantist's version of "honkey." As per philosopher C.L. Stevenson's concept of "persuasive definitions," Afrocentrists seek to impose terms of discourse that confirm their beliefs without the need to argue them.

In December 1994, a columnist in Harlem's *Amsterdam News*, New York's oldest black newspaper, complained that commercialism had soiled Kwanzaa's purity. Conversely, in his 1994 pamphlet "Kwanzaa," Harlem community activist Cedric McClester gave "a special thanks to Mr. Jose Ferrer, a true marketing genius and a living example of the Kwanzaa principles":

> The true significance of Kwanzaa lies in the seven principles it is based on. Unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity and faith are not only good principles to live by, they are also universally recognized as proper guides for cohesive socialization.

Most Afrocentric statements of faith are meant to be taken literally by white devils, but read "Black" by "Africans." If the seven principles of Kwanzaa were "universally recognized," there would be no need to state them, and they would be out of place in a specifically black celebration couched in East African Kiswahili ("Umoja, Kugichagulia, Ujima, Ujamaa, Nia, Juumba, and Imani"). One hears always from black nationalist leaders and their "progressive" white stooges of the need for "unity against those who would divide us," as if Martians were coming from outer space to break an indivisible human solidarity. The solidarity, of course, is that of black nationalists against whites—and black opponents. It never occurs to black nationalists' white supporters that they play the role of "Uncle Toms," prostrating themselves before those who hate them because of their skin color.

White "liberals" demand respect for blacks' "right to self-definition." Fair enough—if blacks want to celebrate Kwanzaa privately. But as part of a consciously anti-Christian movement, Kwanzaa owes what popularity it enjoys entirely to its having been imposed on children, black and nonblack alike, through public schools and publicly funded agencies, often with the help of powerful whites. Not only is its establishment unconstitutional, but liberals who denounce every attempt to reintroduce public school prayer have been curiously quiet regarding the state establishment of Kwanzaa. Apparently, some self-definitions are more equal than others.

McClester claims that Ron Everett/Maulana Karenga's invention, which "began as a cultural idea . . . has blossomed into the only nationally celebrated, indigenous, non-religious, non-heroic, non-political African-American holiday." That's a lot of "non's." Just before denying that Kwanzaa is a religious holiday, McClester praises Allah. Immediately after denying that it is a political holiday, he describes Kwanzaa as "an expression of [Everett's] nationalist Us organization." He denies that Kwanzaa is a "Christmas substitute," only to note that "Dr. Karenga recognized the undue hardship that the over commercialization of Christmas has for black people and others who are at the lowest rung of the social strata. Therefore, those who find Kwanzaa to be more meaningful to them, now have an option and can still be part of the holiday season." Are we to believe it is a mere coincidence that Everett/Karenga chose the week of December 26-January 1 to celebrate Kwanzaa?

In other words, no matter how one views it, Kwanzaa poses problems. If Kwanzaa is political, why should Americans recognize a holiday not the property of all the people? And if Kwanzaa is religious, then it has no claim on public propagation, unless other religions get parity.

To be sure, for most black nationalists Kwanzaa and the Afrocentric counterculture it is a part of represent little more than fast-buck schemes. However, for Kwanzaa's empire-building founder and his politically influential supporters, this counterculture provides a racial stronghold in which blacks can be as "nasty as they wanna be," a counter-religion to destroy Christianity, and a state-within-the-state that seeks, ultimately, to destroy the state surrounding and supporting it. Too many of Kwanzaa's white supporters have a sentimental attachment to the notion of a Marxist worker's revolution that long outlived their connection either to Marxism or labor. They refuse to face the fact that race, while a potentially revolutionary factor,

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is no substitute for working-class action. They prepare for a whirlwind that supposedly will sweep away the garbage of history, leaving clear the road to progress. Instead, this whirlwind will blow away the nation's moral and religious foundations, laying waste to all roads, knocking out all sign posts, and leaving a panicked, confused people to find its way—or to yield to someone claiming to know the way. They likewise refuse to acknowledge that a racial whirlwind already came through not long ago, with horrific results. Note that such a scenario poses much greater risks to blacks than to whites. And as a Jew, I am particularly enraged that so many of Kwanzaa's white apologists are themselves Jews.

Be that as it may, one is not obliged to sit back and watch as things "work themselves out" in the name of "self-determination." For the "self" being invoked is a violent, irrational changeling that can only breed anarchy, with worse up ahead.

Nicholas Stix writes from New York City.

ECONOMICS

Who Are the Taxers?

by Jeffrey Tucker

Never say Republicans can't learn. After losing the presidency in 1992 on the tax issue, they now use euphemisms for their tax hikes and hide the increases with new and improved fiscal gimmickry. In this Congress, the word "reform" has come to be synonymous with a scheme to extract more money from the private sector, while seeking to avoid paying the electoral price.

This Congress has revived an attack on "loopholes" as evidence of special-interest privilege and a fiscal evil that must be destroyed. The House Ways and Means Committee, Washington's leading hotbed of congressional graft, voted to grab another $19 billion from the private sector through this sneaky means.

The flat taxers similarly denounce all "loopholes," and propose to eliminate the charitable deduction and the mortgage-interest deduction. Meanwhile, Bill Archer of Texas proposes to close the "loopholes" used by corporate donors to the Democrats (the old tax-and-spend party), but, of course, he invites these corporations to "work with" him on the final bill.

What exactly is a "loophole"? It is an exception to the general rule that income of a certain variety is to be taxed at some level. Let's say, for example, that all furniture manufacturers are taxed at 20 percent, while the makers of roll-top desks are taxed at only five percent. We have here a "loophole" that roll-top desk makers undoubtedly favor and would like to keep. That, presumably, makes them a special interest.

But exactly who are these desk makers hurting by lobbying to retain their special tax break? Only those who would otherwise benefit from stealing their profits. As for the producers, they are merely gaining a legal right to keep an additional quantity of the profits gained from selling consumers goods they want to buy. What, then, would be the point of denouncing these people as a "special interest" that must be stamped out and then raising their taxes up to 20 percent?

Some economists say the loophole should be repealed on grounds that it distorts market decision making. That is, more people go into roll-top desk making than would be the case without the loophole. But looked at from another view, the relatively low tax on roll-tops is less discouraging to potential producers than the higher tax on other furniture. The solution to this alleged distortion, then, is to lower taxes on all furniture instead of plugging a loophole that applies to one. Why not turn the whole industry into a loophole?

This point is inadmissible in conventional political debate. Politicians devoted to "revenue neutrality" have apparently sworn an oath never to allow government revenue to decline. If they catch someone keeping more money than someone else, they always propose to "upwardly harmonize" the tax rates. This is not only economically destructive; it's unjust as well.

Let's say a band of criminals has been raiding your neighborhood, but mysteriously leaving one house untouched. As a result, this house's residents have their property and their peace of mind. It would be absurd to deal with the crime wave by demanding equal damage to all houses, even if the untouched house had successfully pleaded to be left alone. To crystallize the analogy to tax reform, remember that the ones proposing the rule of equal destruction are the criminals themselves. Destroying more innocent people's property and peace of mind can only satisfy the envious; indeed, envy and greed are the driving forces behind the movement to close loopholes.

Even worse, the Republican leadership would have us believe that by repealing targeted tax allowances, they are attacking "corporate welfare." But how can this be? Welfare clients live off other people's money taken by force. People using tax breaks are merely trying to keep their own money from becoming government property by force. People using tax breaks are the hosts; bums living off others are the parasites. Using the word "welfare" to describe both can only be a deliberate attempt to disguise the real issue. A loophole rescinded constitutes not welfare repealed but a tax raised.

The first signs that tax policy was getting off track came early in this Congress. Washington think-tanks, socialist and free market, joined forces to denounce "corporate welfare." Repeal that, they said, before you go after conventional welfare. Of course, the purpose of the makeshift coalition was to enhance the prospects of favorable media attention, which it did. But the liberals' reasons for joining the coalition was to cut industrial subsidies given in the name of defense (good idea) and repeal corporate loopholes (bad idea). Meanwhile, the "free-market" guys had something else in mind. They were calling for a cut in subsidies to the sugar industry, bee keepers, and the like (good ideas) and work toward a flat tax by repealing certain deductions (bad idea), while quietly distancing themselves from what they knew to be the questionable agenda of the liberals (impossible).

The organizers played down these differences, and the results were predictable. Congress tossed aside the good parts of both agendas (there's been no cut in the military or cash subsidies for other industries) and kept the bad parts (repealing tax breaks and deductions wherever possible). The think-tanks have been reluctant to draw attention to this subversion because they are always anxious to take credit for anything Congress passes if it approximates the goal of a pet project. The result—as could have been predicted from the beginning—was that Capitol Hill liber-

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tarians gave cover for politicians to do what they like to do most: transfer more money from the private sector to the public sector.

As astonishing as it sounds, the idea of lowering the government's total tax take from its present level is gone entirely. The lost revenue from targeted tax breaks for children (even that's still up in the air) will have to be made up through free increases of other fiscal gimmickry (e.g., shifting rates around by changing the way inflation is calculated). It's hard to remember that in the early 80's, everyone seemed to agree that taxes needed to be lowered.

What does Capitol Hill want besides higher taxes? It wants to change the technique by which we are taxed. For example, some people want to implement a flat tax you can file on a postcard, erroneously supposing that we would prefer efficient muggings to slow extortions. The Social Security tax is "simple" enough to file on a postage stamp, but how does that improve our lives?

Meanwhile, the postcard method will require that the charitable deduction be repealed at the very time when cuts in the welfare state (which aren't going to happen) are supposed to be replaced by increased private charitable giving. Yet who can deny that repealing this deduction will lead to less giving? Only Richard Armey, who says it's his "guess" that we "won't even miss it." Is it possible that when an economist becomes a politician he forgets that people make decisions *on the margin*?

Also repealed will be the mortgage interest deduction, which common sense might suggest would devastate the high-leverage real estate market. But no, says Mr. Armey, since his tax plan—all else being equal—will cause interest rates to fall. His economist hat is back on, but this time doing what economists are worst at: predicting a future that is contingent on 1,000 unknown variables. He's "confident" that homeowners and the real estate industry will support being taxed more.

If you're suspicious of these ideas, turn to the idea of "replacing" the current income tax with the national sales tax, a shell game of fantastic proportions. The idea may appeal to people who are not in business. But let's look at some numbers generated by economist Bruce Bartlett. With no exemptions, it would be 31.9 percent; with food exempted, it would be 37.7 percent; exempt food and medicine, and it would be 49.3 percent. In the end, the national sales taxes would probably have to exceed half of the purchase price of all goods except food. Who doubts that such a tax would cause nationwide economic chaos?

There are other problems. In the transition, savings would be disgorged into consumption to avoid the impending tax. Those who have saved for retirement would be taxed twice. The collection of the tax would be draconian and deadly for rural businesses that have thus far escaped the long reach of the federal government. It's a wonder that a nonsocialist would even consider such a proposal.

The Republican leadership of the new "revolutionary" Congress has probably concocted other tricks to extract more revenue—to be announced in glowing terms in think-tank press releases. If only the Republican leadership would apply its energies to solving one actual problem in this country: not a lack of federal revenue but the declining incomes of middle-class Americans. A good place to start would be to reduce the tax take of the federal government. This Congress made a contract with America; unless taxes are reduced, America should put a contract out on the Congress.

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LAW

Recapturing the Constitution

by Stephen B. Presser

In a landmark five-to-four decision last spring, in *United States* v. *Lopez*, the Supreme Court announced—for the first time in almost 50 years—that Congress had exceeded its interstate commerce powers. At issue was a federal statute—the Gun Free School Zones Act of 1990—which forbade the carrying of firearms within one thousand feet of a school. In the majority opinion, written by Chief Justice Rehnquist, the Court declared that since the regulation of schools had traditionally been a subject of states, and not the federal government, and since there had been no demonstration that the implicated firearms had been involved in interstate commerce, Congress had no jurisdiction over the problem. As Justice Rehnquist argued, for Congress to invoke the power to regulate matters internal to a state (such as the carrying of guns near schools), the activity in question would have to be "substantially related" to interstate commerce. Since the activity in this case had nothing to do with such commerce, the Court declared that Congress was without the power to regulate. Mr. Alfonso Lopez, who had borne such a firearm, could not be punished under federal law.

For the last few decades the rule of the federal government has been, "If it moves, regulate it!" Ever since the New Deal, it has been routinely argued that virtually everything "substantially affected" interstate commerce, and it was this reasoning that supported, for example, the civil rights laws of the 1960's. Those acts regulated public accommodations on the theory that the food they served, or the customers who patronized them, had been involved in interstate commerce. Four members of the Supreme Court were still willing to adopt such a theory in *Lopez*. The newest Justice, Stephen Breyer, wrote in dissent for himself, Justice Ruth Ginsburg, Justice John Paul Stevens, and Justice David Souter (the four now perceived as the Supreme Court's "liberal" block). Breyer explained that since firearms *might* harm or interrupt education, and since the interruption or harm to education *might* result in a threat to economic prosperity, and since diminished economic prosperity of a particular state *could* result in diminished interstate commerce, the requisite nexus to interstate commerce existed, and therefore Congress had the right to regulate firearms near schools. Even liberal commentators were able to see that Breyer's reasoning (borrowed from the argument made by the Clinton administration in trying to salvage the Gun Free School Zones Act) could support *any* congressional regulation of *any* activity within a state, including marriage, childrearing, or any other traditional preserve of state government.

What could be going on here? To some observers, the *Lopez* decision can

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only be explained in light of the ongoing "Tenth Amendment movement," the attempt (by mostly Republicans) to revive the last number of the Bill of Rights. This amendment, passed because of the Founders' fear that the federal government would overwhelm, crush, and finally dissolve the state governments, was designed to preserve our system of federalism, or dual federal and state sovereignty. The idea was that the federal government would deal with truly national concerns, such as interstate and foreign trade, national defense, a national currency, and the conduct of foreign relations, and that virtually all other aspects of American life and law would be left to the state governments. The idea behind the Tenth Amendment is that the government closest to the people—i.e., state, not national, government—could best address most of Americans' problems and ensure the preservation of popular sovereignty itself, the very foundation of the Constitution.

But why is the Tenth Amendment movement suddenly in force? How has it managed, at long last, to sway what may be a majority of the Supreme Court? One explanation is that the federal government has finally grown so big, the deficit so large, and the corruption of federal officials so obvious that even natural defenders of the federal government have grown alarmed. Another reason is the popular perception that the federal government is now dedicated to advancing radical minority opinions, no matter how offensive they may be to cherished American beliefs and traditions. The flag-burning controversy is a prime example.

In *Texas* v. *Johnson* (1989), the United States Supreme Court, by a narrow five-to-four majority, overturned about 100 years of constitutional jurisprudence and held that Texas's statute, which forbade desecration of the United States flag, was unconstitutional because it outlawed "speech" guaranteed by the First Amendment. Flag burning, said the Court's majority, was simply speech. This was too much for Justice Rehnquist, who, writing for the four dissenters, explained that flag burning wasn't speech but an outrageous act of arson, more like, in his words, "an inarticulate grunt" than the type of political speech the First Amendment was designed to protect. Moreover, Rehnquist noted, some of the Supreme Court's greatest champions of First Amendment free speech, most notably Hugo Black and Earl Warren, had quite clearly indicated that punishing flag burning did not run afoul of the First Amendment, because flag burning wasn't speech.

But the majority's expansive reading of the First Amendment, in which an extremely wide variety of acts could be interpreted as protected speech, hit a resonant note with the academy and the media, which applauded the majority's decision as a triumph for cherished rights. Many citizens, however, believing the flag was still worth preserving, beseeched Congress and President Bush. The President dutifully suggested a constitutional amendment to overturn *Texas* v. *Johnson*, but instead Congress passed a statute designed to punish flag burning. In 1990, the Supreme Court struck down this statute as well, which has led once again to an attempt to pass a constitutional amendment protecting the flag.

Even though the opponents of the Flag Amendment tried to paint it as a dangerous trampling of American freedoms, at the same time they sought to dismiss it as a trivial concern, not worth raising to a constitutional level. As they did in 1989 and 1990 when the amendment was first discussed, its critics railed at its proponents for attempting to trivialize or "clutter" the Constitution. The question of how something terrifying could be simultaneously trivial was never addressed. But the truth is that the Flag Amendment is neither trivial nor an attack on the Bill of Rights, and one suspects its enemies actually sense this.

Real speech—verbal, written, published, or broadcast—would be unaffected by the Flag Protection Amendment, and no Americans would be barred from expressing any ideas that they can now express. Moreover, the amendment effort is actually an attempt to turn back the tide of "self-actualization" jurisprudence that sustains the liberals' expansive reading of the First Amendment. It was that jurisprudence—a bastard sort of constitutional reading—that also gave us the right to purchase contraceptives in *Griswold* v. *Connecticut* (1965), the "woman's right to choose" in *Roe* v. *Wade* (1973), and the right to ban school prayer in *Lee* v. *Weisman* (1992).

Such jurisprudence assumes that the task of the Constitution was to create a national government that would stop the states from interfering with any person's lifestyle choices. But the Constitution's Framers were not late 18th-century John Stuart Mills, or precursors of new-age self-improvement mongers. Indeed, the Framers crafted the Bill of Rights in order to restrain the federal government from imposing particular cultural choices on the people of the states. The project of the liberal self-actualizers, then, actually perverts the very purpose of the Bill of Rights, since they seek to straitjacket the states and the federal government into promoting their own limited cultural vision. The Bill of Rights, through a dubious line of Supreme

LIBERAL ARTS

DAHMER THE HUMANITARIAN

According to the *Milwaukee Sentinel* last September, Joyce Flint, the mother of serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer, whose body has been cremated, said she "wants her son's brain examined to determine whether biological factors influenced his actions. 'Jeff always said that if he could be of any help, he wanted to do whatever he could.'"

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Court decisions which read the 14th Amendment as meaning that virtually all the restraints that the first ten amendments imposed on the federal government should be imposed on the states as well, has been turned into a club to beat back the state governments. That the Bill of Rights was written to guarantee dual sovereignty and federalism has been all but forgotten.

Thus the similarity between the Flag Amendment's sponsors and the majority opinion in the *Lopez* decision. The Flag Amendment, insofar as it returns power to the states, is about renewing federalism. But the effort to return to federalism, to return to a regime where the people of the states can exercise their most fundamental right—that of self-government—springs from a realization that a regime that promotes liberty without responsibility is one that will end in anarchy and tyranny.

The Flag Amendment may still fail, of course, because its detractors are legion in the media, the law schools, and the legal profession generally. Their "scare rhetoric" about the First Amendment, as Harvard Law Professor Richard Parker (perhaps the only Harvard faculty member who is a friend of the Flag Amendment) calls it, may yet succeed. Just a few weeks after *Lopez*, by another five-to-four majority, in *U.S. Term Limits, Inc.* v. *Thornton*, the Supreme Court refused to allow states to limit the terms of their federal representatives, even though the Constitution was silent on the question, and even though term limits on federal representatives as a matter of state discretion had apparently been accepted at the time of the passage of the Constitution. The *Term Limits* case was another blow to federalism, but it was the occasion of a brilliant and cogent dissent by Justice Clarence Thomas, who revived the federalist arguments.

Thomas is emerging as the Court's most powerful defender not only of original understanding and judicial restraint, but also of federalism, a color-blind Constitution, and a morality that springs from the natural law that undergirds our system of government. Thomas is the Court's youngest member, he may serve longer than anyone else on the Court, and he is turning into an eloquent foe of liberalism. There is reason to believe, particularly in view of the Court's recent hostility to race-based remedies, that we are witnessing a rethinking of the liberal constitutional dogmas of the 60's, 70's, and 80's and that a return to our original constitutional foundation is underway. Even the *New York Times*' court reporter Linda Greenhouse, the semiofficial voice of the liberal constitutional establishment, has begun to watch with wonder what she calls, borrowing a term from Judge Douglas Ginsburg of the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, the beginning of the return of the "Constitution in Exile."

If the Constitution actually returns from "exile," it will bring with it the Framers' original understanding that there can be no enduring rule of law without virtue and morality on the part of the people, and that the people's morality cannot long subsist without the public encouragement and protection of religion. Remembering these nearly forgotten truths will not be easy, but *Lopez* and the Flag Protection Amendment, and other developments, are encouraging signs. Perhaps the revolutionary recapture of the Constitution has begun.

Stephen B. Presser, the Raoul Berger Professor of Legal History at Northwestern University School of Law, is the author of Recapturing the Constitution: Race, Religion, and Abortion Reconsidered *(Regnery).*

Our Platonic Guardians

by Gregory J. Sullivan

In 1986, Justice William Brennan delivered an address in which he called for "state courts to step into the breach" left by what he discerned as a federal contraction of rights and remedies. In other words, those who wish to remake American society along radically egalitarian lines could no longer count on a sympathetic federal judiciary; the revolution would now have to be continued in state tribunals using state constitutions.

Brennan must have had in mind the court from which he was elevated to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1956—that is, the New Jersey Supreme Court. No state court has been more aggressive at social engineering than the New Jersey Supreme Court under Chief Justice Robert Wilentz. The decision last term in *New Jersey Coalition Against War in the Middle East* v. *J.M.B. Realty Corporation* demonstrates why the doctrine of judicial restraint is as essential in state as in federal courts for the preservation of a republican polity.

In this case, the court held, in a majority opinion written by Wilentz, that large, privately owned shopping malls must permit leafletting by issue-oriented groups. The decision has all the hallmarks of a Wilentz opinion: at 72 pages, it is far too long (a friend of mine has a maxim: the more they write, the more they have to hide), the prose is ponderous, and the reasoning specious. Wilentz based this "right" on the free-speech protections found in the New Jersey Constitution. (This source is all he could use; the federal Constitution contains no right to hand out political propaganda in a shopping mall.)

A central preoccupation of Wilentz's jurisprudence is the tension between affluent (white) suburbs and impoverished (black) cities. This sociological theme is conspicuous in *New Jersey Coalition*, where Wilentz relies on the notion that the suburban shopping mall has replaced the downtown business district. But this analysis is both superficial and flawed, as Justice Marie Garibaldi's dissent trenchantly pointed out:

> The inescapable mission of shopping malls is not to be the successor to downtown business districts; rather, it is to provide a comfortable and conducive atmosphere for shopping, a mission into which mall owners have invested large sums and energy. . . .
>
> Common sense also dictates that privately-owned-and-operated shopping malls are not the functional equivalent of downtown business districts. . . . Shopping malls do not have housing, town halls, libraries, houses of worship, hospitals, or schools. Nor do they contain the small store, such as the corner grocer, that used to serve as the forum for exchange of ideas.

The New Jersey Supreme Court has applied free-speech protections to speech on private property before, so in one sense *New Jersey Coalition* is nothing but a slide farther down the slippery slope. But what this case also represents is a startling contempt for private property, which also happens to enjoy rather

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substantial protection under the law, notwithstanding the *New York Times*'s cavalier reference to a shopping mall as "nominally private property." As the dissent observed, "Under the majority's theory, private property becomes municipal land and private-property owners become the government."

Of course, it would be a serious misapprehension to assume that this case reflects a principled devotion to free speech. On the contrary, rarely has a court been more vigilant than the Wilentz court in scrutinizing the political correctness of speech before adjudicating the issue of whether it can be allowed. Recently, for instance, a New Jersey Supreme Court decision was summarily vacated by the U.S. Supreme Court for its unconstitutional overreaching in placing restrictions on law-abiding pro-life picketers. One wonders how the leafletting case would have come out had the leaflets conveyed a pro-life message.

The *New Jersey Coalition* case illustrates how subversive a results-driven jurist is with respect to the real policy preferences of New Jersey residents. Wilentz has shown again and again throughout his tenure that *his* vision of the good society must prevail, with or without constitutional sanction. Whether in circumscribing zoning practices to compel the construction of low-income housing, restructuring school funding to destroy local control and to waste more money on schools that resemble war zones, or effectively nullifying the death penalty by creating labyrinthine standards for its application, Wilentz has shown an utter disregard for the text and history of the state constitution and supplanted that document with his own leftist (and race-obsessed) views.

To be sure, Wilentz inherited a court with well-developed activist inclinations. It was in New Jersey, after all, that a "right to die" for Karen Ann Quinlan was fashioned out of the misbegotten federal privacy cases. Still, Wilentz has pushed well beyond anything that preceded him. Indeed, given his role in promulgating policy from the bench, it is certainly no overstatement to say that for the past 15 years or so, Wilentz has easily been the most powerful *politician* in the state.

Fortunately, all New Jersey judges face mandatory retirement at age 70, and Wilentz must go in 1997. Governor Christine Whitman will appoint his successor, and she should not use the opportunity to show her sensitivity to clamorous minorities or women's groups. Rather, she should select a chief justice who will construe the state constitution reasonably and not treat it as a Rorschach test into which a revolutionary agenda can be read. New Jersey has had enough of what Judge Learned Hand once called Platonic Guardians.

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The Ultimate Tax Protest

by Douglass H. Bartley

In *Suzanne M. Bartley et al* v. *United States*, a class-action suit filed on April 17, 1995, in federal district court in Milwaukee, my wife, on behalf of herself and all others who paid federal taxes for the years 1991-93, has sued for a refund of approximately 70 percent of the revenue collected during those years. For fiscal year 1993 alone, the total amount of the refund approximates $808 billion. If the pattern of overcollection for fiscal year 1993 holds true for fiscal year 1991-1992, the grand total of the refund would be a staggering $2.4 trillion.

Unlike the usual "tax protest" cases, the general basis for this suit is that the government, with its various tax statutes and regulations, has far exceeded its lawful taxing authority under Article One, Section 8 of the Constitution. That provision names almost all of the government's lawful spending powers and strictly limits it to raising taxes to carry out the enumerated functions and those alone. The government has *no general power of taxation*.

The Constitution's strict limitation on federal taxing power is made clear in the *Federalist* papers by both James Madison and Alexander Hamilton. Madison, in *Federalist 41*, said:

> It has been urged and echoed that the [taxing power] amounts to an unlimited commission to exercise every power which may be alleged to be necessary for the common defense and general welfare. No stronger proof could be given of the distress under which these writers labor for objections, than their stooping to such a misconstruction.

Hamilton agreed in *Federalist 83*: "This specification [of enumerated powers] evidently excludes all pretension to a general legislative authority, because an affirmative grant of special powers would be absurd, as well as useless, if a general authority was intended."

As the Constitution makes clear, the federal taxing power is limited to funding national defense; postal operations; federal courts; coining and borrowing operations; the administration of laws on bankruptcy, naturalization, patents, trademarks, counterfeiting, weights and measures; the punishment for crimes on the high seas and violations of international law; the District of Columbia and the management of other federal properties; and the regulation of commerce with foreign nations, with Indian tribes, and among the states. For 1993, about 70 percent of all federal expenditures

LIBERAL ARTS

ON *BROWN* v. *BOARD OF EDUCATION*

"The whole matter revolves around the self-respect of my people. How much satisfaction can I get from a court order for somebody to associate with me who does not wish me near them?. . . I regard the ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court as insulting rather than honoring my race. . . . I have no sympathy nor respect for the . . . pressure group concerned in this court ruling."

—*from Zora Neale Hurston's* Folklore, Memoirs, and Other Writings, *published by the Library of America*

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were for purposes not within these enumerated powers. Thus 70 percent of all taxes collected for that year are unconstitutional.

The suit also debunks the myth that Congress has power under the Commerce Clause to tax in order to fund programs not otherwise within the enumerated powers, such as many of today's social welfare programs. To the Framers, "commerce among the states" meant *trade among* the states, not manufacturing, mining, agriculture, retailing, or other activities *within* states—activities that all *precede* trade *among* the states. As Professor Richard Epstein of the University of Chicago Law School has shown, it makes no sense textually to say that "commerce" means manufacturing, agriculture, or any other activity that precedes trade:

> One should assume that the word commerce . . . bears the same meaning with respect to each of its objects. . . . What possible sense does it make as a matter of ordinary English to say that Congress can regulate 'manufacturing with foreign nations, or with Indian tribes' or for that matter 'manufacturing among the several states'?

Only if "trade" is substituted for "commerce" does the Commerce Clause make sense: "Congress shall have power . . . to regulate trade with foreign nations and trade among the states, and trade with Indian tribes."

The tax refund suit got a big boost from a recent decision of the Supreme Court. About ten days after the suit was filed, the Court declared in *United States* v. *Lopez* that there actually are limits on the commerce power. Perhaps the most important statement in the case came in Justice Clarence Thomas's concurrence, where he complained, "The [Commerce Clause] power we have accorded Congress has swallowed Article One, Section 8."

Justice Holmes once said, "Great cases, like hard cases, make bad law." The tax refund case is at once both a great and a hard case. It is a great case not just because the amount of money in question is astronomical, higher than any other in legal history, and because it involves a question common to all federal taxpayers, but because it seeks to reverse more than 60 years of federally mandated social engineering and to revitalize the simple, founding principle that the government has no more power than that specifically given it in the Constitution.

Douglass H. Bartley is a tax lawyer in Milwaukee. Contributions toward defraying the expenses of this suit are welcome (757 North Broadway, Suite 500, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 53202), as is help from interested counsel.

LITERATURE

Kiddy Lit for the 90's

by Herb London

Children's books used to relate tales of heroes and villains. They presented a Manichaean world in which good triumphed over evil. Children might be scared, but they were assured that the forces of light could easily be distinguished from the forces of evil. Well, that scenario of yesteryear has been replaced by a very different condition today.

The 1994 Newberry medal for the "best" children's book went to Lois Lowry for *The Giver*. This is a tale about a hypothetical community in which issues of suicide, euthanasia, and mental telepathy are emphasized. Characters in this novel reside in a controlled community with narrowly defined roles of birthmothers, caretakers, nurturers, laborers, and givers. The government determines the number of children per family. In the House of the Old, leaders decide when a person is to be released (read: put to death). At the Ceremony of Release, there is a toast, and a goodbye speech given by the person released. When twins are born, only one is allowed to live. Invariably, the smaller twin is "released" with a lethal injection. On one occasion, a 12-year-old objects to the practice, but he is mollified by a Giver who points out that her daughter asked to be released ten years earlier and was given a syringe to inject herself.

In one California school system, several parents complained about the use of this book in an elementary school, charging that it was insensitive to the value of life. These parents were told that "public education may not be the best choice for them." I agree. What conceivable benefit is there for youngsters in a book of this kind? Are ten-year-olds prepared to make judgments about euthanasia?

Clearly, what once inspired, now inflames. What was once the axial standard for moral behavior in Horatio Alger, *Toodle, The Little Engine That Could*, has been converted into amorality. After all, teachers and librarians now ask whether, in this complicated world, we even have a *right* to tell children how to conduct themselves.

My reply is that you have a right and an *obligation* to do so. Teachers have an obligation to select books that provide a moral basis for good behavior. Homer is a better guide for the future than Ms. Lowry, and no matter what the rationalizers say, virtue must be cultivated. The good must defend itself not merely against the bad, but against the indifferent, the complacent, and the relative.

If the myths in our culture are derived merely from the pragmatic, then "anything goes" is the lyric for social discourse. Children cannot be expected to make philosophical judgments without a grounding in what is right and what is wrong, what is good and what is bad. To assume, as contemporary pedagogues do, that students can arrive at sensible judgments through the exchange of opinions about controversial issues is wrongheaded. Critical-mindedness does not occur in a vacuum. Students must have a knowledge of morality in order to make moral decisions.

Unfortunately, the democratic idea that the free exchange of opinion will inevitably yield truth is betrayed by a different reality. The free exchange of *intelligent* opinion may lead inexorably to truth, but *only* if the opinions have value. In our era, we have debased this notion with a belief in all opinions and a reliance on the pedagogical idea that any controversial notion should be the subject of class discussion. Is it any wonder Johnny can't read, Mary can't add, and neither can distinguish between right and wrong?

Herb London is the John M. Olin Professor of Humanities at New York University.

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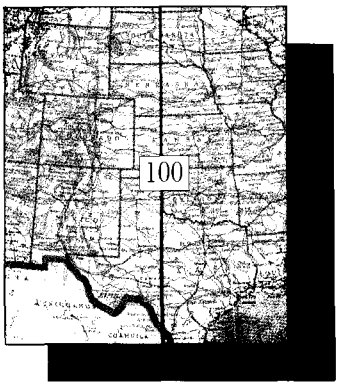
by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

Elk Country



As the supernatural world is eternally at work behind events in the natural world, so the world of man-in-nature continues to operate behind the synthetic, abstracted, and unreal world of man-outside-of-nature. For that reason alone, I shall always hunt elk. (Though of course, I really don't need any reason.)

On the afternoon before the start of season, I rode past the busy hunting camps along Fontenelle Creek, among them Kovaches' 25-man Army tent guyed in a stand of tall aspen. Ten or 12 years ago, when I was still learning the country, I had hunted with John and Jim Kovach, riding the mountains all day on sheepherders' horses borrowed from the Taliaferro ranch and returning at night to John's elk-heart stews cooked with milk, potatoes, and sliced onions. Since that time, all but one of the Kovach brothers has moved out of the area, John to Flagstaff, Arizona, where he nearly lost his life when a chainsaw kicked back on him, splintering his rib cage and cutting up his heart like a jigsaw puzzle. Now, alone save for the mare beneath me, I forded the creek at the crossing and ascended the West Bear Trap trail in the smoky light of a dying October afternoon to make camp under the red steeps of Indian Ridge, within a stand of limber pine at 9,080 feet. As we approached the site, the mare unprompted stepped from the trail, walked between the trees to the fire ring I had built years before, and halted with her nose against the familiar pine trunk, where I snubbed her short and unloaded the packs. An hour and a quarter of light remained. I raised the tent in the oval clearing, removed the rocks from the ash and added them to the ring, and went in search of wood for a fire. The dead lower boughs of a nearby pine made smears the color of dried blood on the blue twilight of the forest. I gathered several of these brushes and laid them over a handful of twigs in the bottom of the fire pit. They exploded in flame at the touch of a match, and I threw on some larger sticks from the pile that remained from the year before. While the conflagration burned down to coals I removed the cook pots from the horse packs, and the eating utensils as well. Tonight instead of elk-heart stew there were canned chili and beef stew to choose from. I opened the stew with my camp knife and scraped the contents into the battered, carboned pot. Somewhere in the timbered hole not far from here an old boar bear has his den. I tossed the empty can and the greasy lid with it onto the fire, so as to put temptation beyond him. Finally I took the fifth of Jim Beam from the pack and poured a finger or so of whiskey. It tasted all right, but failed to exhilarate. While I drank, I set the stew pot on the fire and ate a hurried meal while the mare grazed at the end of her picket line. When I finished eating I cleaned the pot with boiling water and a rag, retied the mare to the tree, undressed to my longjohns inside the tent, and got into the sleeping bag. Though it was early still for sleep, today was over. Tomorrow at daybreak I was going to hunt bulls.

The mare stood without stamping through the night. At dawn the air was still, the brooding wilderness hushed. I took a long drink of cold water from a poly bottle and walked away from camp with the rifle at a few minutes before seven, moving carefully through the blue dusk with the morning star over my left shoulder toward the rise of cliff that blocked the final stars. A tired half moon tipped in the western sky signaled another fine Indian summer day, dryer and warmer than preferred for hunting. As the sun rose behind me I glassed the ridge from a polished log before slipping along its rocky base into the trees, where without warning the elk smell jumped at me like a startled overpowering herd from the massed black trunks of the forest. Almost at once I cut fresh sign, the tracks nearly indistinguishable on the forest floor but the droppings still moist and slick. I bent to finger the pellets and heard a sound like a hammer striking a wooden plank: a rifle shot, miles to the northeast and far below. I listened, but heard no more shooting. Following the game trail for half a mile, I found much sign but no animals, not even in the grassy openings where elk often linger to graze after sunrise. There were plenty of elk in the forest, some of them perhaps observing me as I paused, but approaching them in the timber without tracking snow or another hunter to work with me would be very difficult. The tops of the trees were still in the windless morning. I hunted my way back to camp under a small bombardment of pine cones tossed by the chattering red squirrels that flowed up and down the tree trunks and along the branches, picketed the mare, and built up the fire to boil coffee and plan out the day's hunt. I had just poured a second cup when an orange coat bobbed up from a gulley 100 yards away, and beneath it a large man with a gray beard, wearing an orange coat with a camouflage pattern in it and a rifle over his shoulder. I offered him coffee, which he refused politely. "Where do you get water for your horse?" he asked. I showed him on the map how to find the spring on the west slope of Indian Ridge. "I guess we'll go deeper in then," he said. "I ain't cut any fresh sign this morning. Must be because there ain't no water here. No use huntin' 'em where they ain't at." I nodded sympathetically, but did not mention the sign I had found in the timber. "Where are your horses?" "Oh, just over there." He gestured vaguely at the trees on the other side of the trail, from which I understood that he and his party had tied up only a few hundred yards away. We wished one another luck, and he walked off in the direction he had indicated. He was scarcely out of sight when a volley of shots rang out behind Indian Ridge; it was followed by a pause, then another volley, and finally by spaced but nevertheless sustained shooting. I tossed what was left of the coffee over the coals, seized the rifle from a tree branch, and, leaving the mare to graze on the picket, ran toward the cliff with my orange coat flapping from

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my shoulders.

Each year outfitters put a couple of camps in west of Indian Ridge, at the head of South Fork of Fontenelle Creek. They equip the dudes who want them with horses, and turn the rest loose on the forested slopes to beat the timber and kick the elk over the ridgetop and down the eastern cliff face, where they find me lying on my belly waiting for them with the rifle across a log. This morning I failed to reach the log before elk began to spill across the ridge, compelling me to take cover in a pine stand where I discovered a springy, fairly unsuitable branch for a rest. The elk separated as they descended into two herds of 20 or 25 animals each, one group moving lower on the slope than the other; mostly cows and calves, some spikes, but also a number of good bulls, five or six-pointers to judge by their coloration, bulk, and the angle at which they carried their heads. They were still 800 or 900 yards out, and holding so tightly together that it would have been next to impossible to kill one without wounding several more. The 200-odd hooves striking upon scree filled the shallow concavity of the cliff wall with a roar like that of approaching cavalry, causing me to remember the hunter in camp who had left only minutes before to collect his horses—and his friends. They would be arriving momentarily, riding straight at the herds scrambling high above the forest floor—far too high still for a responsible shot. In five or even four minutes the lower herd, which included two of the biggest bulls, would have descended within rifle range, but in much less time the riders would be upon me, taking crazy shots and scaring the animals back out of range, if they did not actually wound some of them. The sound of traveling elk became confused in my mind with the clatter of horses approaching along the trail from the rear. Already my too hasty maneuverings for a better rest had caught the attention of one of the lead cows, who stopped short and pointed her nose downhill in my direction. Stepping forward abruptly from the trees I fired a shot into the air, causing half a hundred elk to wheel almost as one animal and flow back up the ridge to the saddle where the horse trail went over. Then, shouldering the rifle, I started for camp, expecting to meet up with the party of horsemen on the way. In fact I encountered no such party, nor did I ever see the gray-bearded hunter himself again.

Half an hour later the mare was breasting the trail to the top of the cliff, where we turned and followed the herd northward a few hundred yards below the ridgeline where, of a sudden, we were entirely surrounded by elk: great dark shadows leaping, bounding, sprinting through the trees and over deadfall in total uncanny silence. I swung down from the mare, drew the rifle from the scabbard, and was proceeding on foot when three shots at very close range exploded ahead, catching us on the verge of a clearing in the wind-stunted pines. I dropped the reins, bolted a shell into the firing chamber, and froze with the mare at my back, watching the opposite edge and the narrow corridor that ran behind it through the trees. When the first elk appeared, its dark face reddened by sunlight, I was certain that it must have seen us. But we remained moveless, and it continued along the corridor passing behind a thicket away from the now audible voices of the unseen hunters. I set the rifle stock against my shoulder and the telescopic sight on the next opening in the trees, my heart pounding but the rifle steady in my grip as I waited. The cow trotted directly behind the reticule, followed, as I brought the gun down, by an earnest but apparently carefree calf.

The outfitters' camps were quiet that afternoon, and nobody kicked back game for me to shoot. I rode out as much of that high magnificent country as I could, riding as far south as the end of Indian Ridge above the deep gorge of South Fork, with views to the mountains of Idaho and Utah and a towering column of gray and pink smoke rising from a prairie fire 40 miles away at Nugget Canyon. I rode through timber and across open parks, hunting as John Kovach had taught me so many years ago when, in a good season, the Kovach camp had four or five animals down at once and we picked them up with a pack string and a chainsaw on October 31. At the center of one of these parks I came upon a pile of half-burned pine boughs, relic of an accident I had witnessed several years before in which a hunter from Fort Bridger received a compound fracture of the leg from being bucked off his horse when the pistol he was carrying tied into the saddle strings discharged a load of bird shot. While one of his party went to call for help on the cellular phone, the others built a smudge fire of green pine to guide the Lifeflight helicopter from Salt Lake City in. On the way to water the mare at the outfitters' spring we were nearly run over by the biggest cow elk I had ever seen, fleeing in terror at our approach from behind a tree. When we arrived back at camp the shadow of Indian Ridge made an early twilight, and the firepit was cold. I built up a roaring blaze in it and poured three fingers of the whiskey, which seemed more inspirational than it had the previous evening. Stretched on the ground with the drink in my hand, watching the blue smoke shot with sparks rolling among the black spires of the trees, I did not really care whether I shot an elk this season or not. The engagement at close quarters that I had experienced all day seemed more than sufficient satisfaction or reward.

The next morning was as still and warm as the previous one had been. Restless from a surfeit of sleep I rose early, hiked the few hundred yards in almost pitch dark to the log, and sat with the rifle across my lap, awaiting first light. When it came, I discerned no game on the ridge above. As I had expected, the shots and excitement of the day before had caused the elk to go deep in the timber, where they would hold for the next several days. Dutifully but without enthusiasm I entered the forest and checked the openings and the game trails connecting them. I was nearly back at the log when the outfitters' dudes cut loose. By the time the first elk showed on the ridgeline I was behind it, cradling the rifle on a perpendicular stob. They were a cow, a spike, and a three-point, which however was hanging far behind the first two animals. I had the spike just in range when suddenly he stopped and posed for me there on the steep, as if he wanted his picture taken: young, handsome, and very proud. The bullet's impact knocked him back on his suddenly powerless haunches, and then he fell, rolling and bounding over the clattering talus blocks. It took him as long to die as I required to reach him across 650 yards, and as I clambered upward he beat a frantic tattoo on the rock with his front hooves, rolled his eyes, and emitted a terrible death-yell. The eyes remained wide open, clear, and sentient in death, as if he intended to haunt me for the rest of my life. I had him gutted in four minutes, and flung a piece of the liver to one of the squawking attentive camp robbers that had been following me all morning from tree to tree. c

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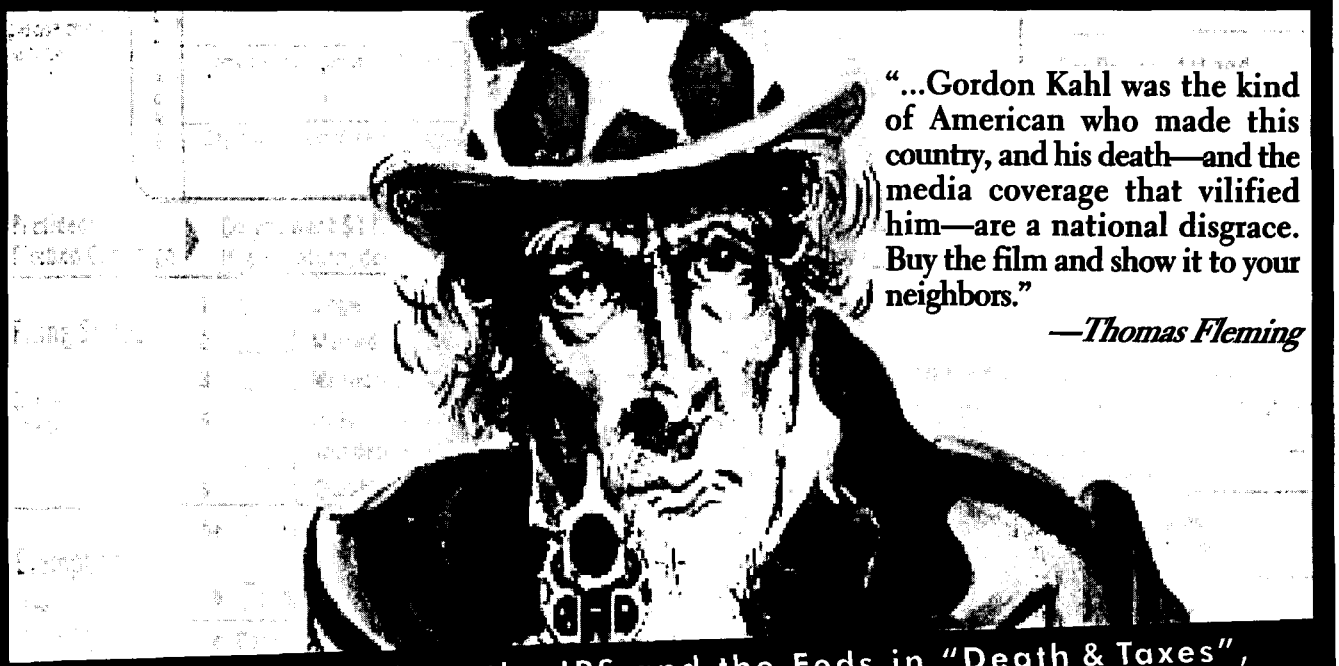

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